



March 1986 98p 310 Pta HFL 6.50

Yie Ar Kung Fu Vs Kung Fu Master Fists fly!

C16/Plus 4 COMMANDO



50 to be won

Lord of the Rings Boomdark's Revenge reviewed

C128 latest software tests



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MARCH

WHAT'S GOING ON The Amiga and the 128D show off at the Which Computer Show. Biggles flies on the 64, Corby plant closed.

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EXAM FLOP 'O' Level revision software put to the test.

ACTIVISION'S

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128 MONITORS

All you need to know about buying and connecting a monitor to your 128.

PEOPLE Eugene Lacev

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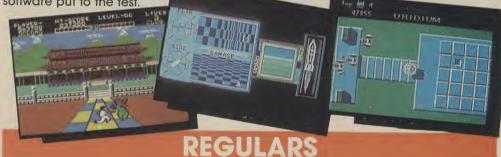
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THE GAME OF A LIFETIME*



Available for Commodore 64, Spectrum 48K and Spectrum +. Coming soon: Amstrad and MSX.



FIREBIRD SOFTWARE WELLINGTON HOUSE UPPER ST MARTIN S LANE LONDON WC2H 9DL



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Sweet charity

I am writing to complain there are more deserving polite - grovel to him. causes than a bunch of themselves by taking harmful substances? What about old people or the sick?

I am all in favour of charity work, but why drugs? Give it to those Dear CU, who deserve it.

Bruce Allen, Basildon, Essex.

 Drug addicts are victims in their own way, you can't knock people this industry acknowledges responsibility to the public. Having said that, it was a surprising choice of charity in some choice of charity in some ment, "put down the ways. Anybody out there revolting natives". For got an opinion on this one?

Pet corner

Dear CU.

I am writing to you because I need help. Yes, I've tried radio phone-ins and agony aunts but noone seems interested in my predicament.

My problem is Adam, my adopted pet computer person. He won't pay any attention to me. Whenever I ask him to do something he ignores me. Not once has he offered to play a game with

Can it be that he just doesn't like me or am I doing something wrong? Worried Owner. Blackpool.

seem to have been most Michael de Braglio, unfortunate in your Johannesburg, choice of pet person, he South Africa. seems a grumpy little

idiots who choose to kill pet person worries our our industry nasty old behind! consultant is always will-politics gets a foot in the ing to give advice.

Sun City reader

publication but Mike Pattenden's 'Soweto Riot' comment in last September's Hotshots was a below the belt blow for Dear CU, bewilders me!

someone who is apparently making a political statement, this is a racialist comment!

Does Commodore User regard black people as NN83AP. 'natives' - primitive people who roam the jungle?

Making a reference to blacks as 'natives' would invite a blow on the head here in South Africa. If Commodore User holds Africans, why sell your magazine here?

I know you won't print my letter, but unless you print an apology, I will not buy your magazine

We do not need political statements in our favourite computer magourite computer mag-letter in your 'azine! Let Mike Pat-back' column? tenden picket our em-René Groenewoud, bassy, but please just Onyx 15, Dear Worried, You review the games.

pretending that bombing manual it calls it 'Witch' I am an avid fan of your Moscow is a game. M.P. space.

Infocom info.

frustrating is the com- If anyone is interested, work with Elite II. please send me an S.A.E. Thanks. Chris Cobb, 36, Hatton, Ave..

Wellingborough, Northants,

Pen friends?

Dear CU.

boy, and a Commodore information about all the Could you please help me Python on my tail . . . find somebody to correspond with by placing this Above Avletter in your "Feed-Galaxy 3.

Heerhugowaard, The Netherlands.

Elitist

Dear CU.

I am writing about the tips given for Elite in your generous free booklet in the February 1986 issue. It is incorrectly stated that Trumbles are found in "Whichspace", as they are offered to you by the Merchant Prince of Thron if you've a spare about the software swine. You have two op- Oh, dear, ever heard of 5000 credits! Only one is industry's decision to tions: punish him by irony? Your fear of offered, which soon give money from the 'Off starvation, lack of pet-politics totally bewilders multiplies. They can only give money from the 'Off starvation, lack of pet-politics totally bewilders multiplies. They can only the Hook' charity tape to ting and general me — how did they ever be got rid of by flying drug addicts. Surely rudeness; or be more get into South Africa I close to the sun. Using wonder? Sorry to an Escape Pod always For anyone else with depress you but even in seems to leave one

> I would like to know door: charity, tapes, why everyone is sudden-Falklands games, Com- ly calling it 'Whichspace' modore making hun- the area in between dreds redundant, funda- hyperspace occupied by mentalist Republicans Thargons. In the Elite

I have Elite II by the way, which is on a green floppy disk! The only difference to the original Elite is that Firebird your many South African I would like to inform have sneakily put a new for trying to help the readers. How politics your readers of a new piece of music on the title disadvantaged. At least could ever get into a com-adventurers club just for screen, and any attempts puter magazine totally Infocom owners. There to alter a saved file to ewilders me! will be a newsletter with gain Elite status that However, even more hints, tips and a helpline. work with Elite, don't

> I have played the game to the address below. most evenings for a couple of weeks and already own plenty of equipment - I find the docking computer invaluable as it never fails (unless you hit a ship coming out of the station - this once happened a second before I was about to dock. Game over!). I have found it best only to I am a 21-year-old Dutch switch the computers on to dock when you something against South 64 user. I would like to clearly see the shape of correspond with an the space-station in your English Commodore 64 sights, otherwise you are sights, otherwise you are owner, to exchange merely travelling at lessthan-full speed towards possibilities of the Com- it. I must sign off now, modore 64, and so on. though, I think there's a Commander Flash, Above Average,

> > • Thanks for the info, we'll be having a word with our own Elitist Fred





Biggles flies

Mirrorsoft have announced that they are working on a game based on the old Captain W. E. Johns hero Biggles. The game ties in with a new spoof film currently under production and due for release in the Spring.

Biggles, the film, features a seventy year time span bet-

ween the First World War and based, the last part is a flight the modern world via a time simulator scenario.

'unique elements' with planned for inclusion. "classic styles of game play". Though primarily strategy- late May at £9.95 (cass).

machine which enables Biggles to meet his time twin.

The game is broadly based on the film and features four novel ideas already." Specseparate stages combining tacular sound effects are also

Biggles is due for release in

Shorts

Plus/4 saved: Three (and a half) cheers to Software Designs who've rectified Commodore's megagaff on the Plus/4. Frustrated users of the aforementioned know that you can only load and save files from the built-in software to disk. Now you can use tape, with a new program called *Three Plus* One which costs just £4.95. It won't work with the database, though, because that uses 'random access' files - spreadsheet and wp files work just fine. One more plus is that files can be easily transferred if you do decide to upgrade to disk. Three Plus One appears in the latest Softpost catalogue from Commodore (tel: 0536 205555).

PLUS/4 BLUES

Since Christmas the CU of- order service. fices have been flooded with letters and telephone calls from new Plus/4 owners complaining about the lack of software for their new machine.

Many hapless buyers also complained that they bought the Plus/4 under the impression that it would run 64 software.

little software available for Commodore's Softpost mail- round-up in this issue.

Commodore executive, Gail Wellington, denied that the company were being unfair in selling a computer that had little if any software support. "There is more software coming through and we have no intention of not supporting it". she told CU.

On the games front, PLus/4 owners will have to The truth is there is very content themselves with C16 games - all of which are the Plus 4 — and almost all of compatible — and are listed it is obtainable only through in full in our C16/Plus 4

never easier. We've had maps, Pokes for infinite lives, and even 24-page Commodore User supplements on the subject of game beating. But now we have the games aid to top them all — Robtek's Game Killer.

This plug-in cartridge enables you to break into cer-tain programs that have been driving you up the wall and simply sail through to the final screen.

A prototype Game Killer was demonstrated in the CU offices last week and we all had to stand back in amazement as Mastertronic's Kick Start was sliced through . like a knife through butter.

The device works by freezing certain sprites — whilst letting other functions as normal. For example, in Impossible Mission your agent can dash through the rooms, take the lift, and search the rooms whilst the droids just stand and watch.

The bad news about Game Killer, though, is that it will not work with all games. It can only work with those that monitor "sprite collision" which is what happens when two moving objects bump into each other.

As a rough guide Beach Head, Impossible Mission, and Monty on the Run can be ''killed'' but Rambo and Commando can't. The Game Killer is available from Robtek at £14.95. More info on 01-209 0118.

Shorts

Books corner: Prize for the wackiest book yet published for the Commodore 64 goes to Collins with their latest title, called Football Pools with the Commodore 64 (£7.95). A quick browse through its pages shows that you have to key in a mammoth forecasting program called F4. My Uncle Brian reckons the dartboard method is still the best.

Last month we gave you the wrong number for a company called Venturegate. The number should read: 0532 661834

Good times, bad times

modore's ill-fated Cordemonstrated some synby assembly plant. Only thesiser software. eighteen months after opening it with an embarrasing an impact at Which Computer, display of 'we're backing which it didn't do a week Britain' enthusiasm, Comearlier at CES, America's modore announced its largest microcomputing event. closure in early January, with the subsequent loss of 250 jobs.

The 64 and 128 machines assembled at Corby will probably now be made in Commodore's German plant in Brunswick. And Commodore's Chris Kaday is confident that this should not affect the level of supply and service in the UK: "We don't expect any diverse effects in these areas". Taking into consideration Commodore's already 'adverse' service record, those words sound rather hollow.

Amiga goes public

The Amiga did help to lift the general air of gloom when it attracted large crowds at the January Which Computer Show in its first UK public outing. To be fair, though, there was little else for the jaded businessman to enthuse over, a sign that the computer business generally is losing its nerve - and probably a lot of

Showgoers may have drooled over the Amiga's sound and graphics but found no evidence that big-name business software will be available for it; there was absolutely no sign of a good wordprocessor, a reputable database or spreadsheet. And if businesses can't be persuaded to buy it, at over £1,000, who else will?

What we saw displayed was less than encouraging: Taurus Impex showed a fledgling database called Acquisition, both Y2 Computing and Talbot Computers had comms and viewdata software, Nine Tiles had a network system. More interesting. Cygnet Computing showed Amiga Front Desk, a Tecmar company displayed its too many noughts on it.

n every cloud there lies somewhat overpriced Amigaa silver lining except, it compatible 20MB hard disk seems, in those that dive. Music Sales, who produce hang over Com- Music Maker for the 64/128,

> At least Commodore made Why not? Simply because it wasn't there, and the reason for that is probably more to do



with a lack of software than a lack of funds to pay for the binge.

The absence will have added fuel to the war Atari and Commodore are currently waging in America. Atari claims to have more than 100 software titles already available for the 520ST and it's not all games.

What's more, you can actually go into a shop and buy the ST. And to rub salt into the wounds, you'll come out with a lot of change from \$1,000. The Amiga is due to be shipped to the UK at the typesetting, art and production end of March; let's hope the package, whilst the American price-tag doesn't have one

Shorts

MPS Descenders: MPS 801 printer users will know what descenders are and know that they can't get them. So MPS Software has come to the rescue with a replacement chip (£14.95) that redefines the character set to produce the tails on letters like 'p' and 'g'. Of course there's a trade-off: to get the extra dot at the bottom they had to take one off the top. So characters, especially capitals, look a little squashed — but there's a definite overall improvement. Contact MPS on 01-800 3592 for more info.

Shorts

First books for 128:

Following the success of its Anatomy' series of books for the Commodore 64, First Publishing has acquired three more titles, this time for the new 128. Called Anatomy of the C-128, Anatomy of the 1571 and C-128 Tricks and Tips, they'll cost around £13 each. All three books were originally written by Data Becker in Germany, from whom First has also acquired a disk-based Compiler for the 128. That's just finishing translation and will retail at £24.95. Contact First on 07357 5244 for more information.

Shorts

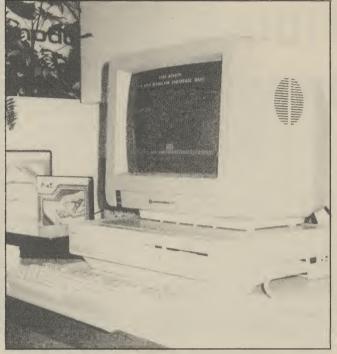
. . And for the 16: Things are looking rosier for the much-maligned C-16. Duckworth's have announced no less than two new books for it: Using the Commodore 16 (£9.95) and The Complete Commodore 16 ROM Disassembly (95p.), both by author and adventure writer Peter Gerrard. The former is moreor-less a Basic and simple machine-code tutorial for beginners complete with a few type-in programs, whilst the latter should satisfy the technical needs of the more sophisticated programmer. Duckworth's is on 01-485 3484.

What's going on What's going on What's going

long last, the big-brother version of the 128 is available. Launched at the Which Computer Show in early January, the new 128D is a C-128 with built-in 1571 disk drive, monochrome monitor and the CP/M operating system. The whole lot will cost you \$499 excluding VAT.

Although the 128D was a little overshadowed by the Amiga at the Show, it did display sufficient 128-dedicated business software to make it a particularly attractive machine for the small business. And that's exactly where Commodore expects it to sell.

Obviously that software was already available on the original 128; what Commodore's done is to design a machine that looks more businesslike — like a true personal computer, in fact.



between using micros for business or leisure - a mould the Atari ST and Commodore Amiga are already trying to break.

But will the 128D sell as well as Commodore hopes? It's major rival must be the Amstrad 128 and PCW 8256 machines, the latter offering computer, disk drive, monitor, printer and bundled software for \$100 less.

The 128D is very sleek and good looking, the perfect machine for users who need a machine that 'looks' and performs to professional standards but who wouldn't turn their noses up at a few slick moves with Rock 'n' Wrestle.

Inevitably, the price will decide whether the 128D takes off or flops like the SX-64. You simply can't help asking, if Amstrad can do it, why can't Commodore?

Bohdan Buciak

128D Launched

Shaping up for business

So the 128D sports the conventional three-unit design: a detachable keyboard, a system box and a monitor perched on

Taking the system box first; that houses the 128's innards with the 1571 disk drive on the right. Power on/off and disk drive indicators appear on the front panel.

And all the 128 ports and sockets are duplicated faithfully. Two joystick ports and a reset switch are found in their usual position down the right side, together with the keyboard cable socket. Round the back there's cartridge and user ports, video and serial ports, TV and RGBI sockets. Thankfully Commodore didn't forget the cassette port, a crime they were guilty of on the SX64 portable.

Once again, the keyboard layout remains faithful to the original despite being detachable and much slimmer. There's an element of portability in the 128D in that the keyboard clips on to the bottom of the system box which has a handle built into the left side. So you can carry it around easily enough, but separate peripheral. So far,

there's still the screen to contend with.

Commodore has opted for 1900M monochrome monitor to bundle up with the machine, probably because the 1901 colour monitor would have taken the price above the crucial \$500 barrier. You can get the 1901 instead, but you'll probably pay around \$150 more for it. For users not bothered about colour, the 1900M will give both 40 and 80-column displays.

Go-faster drive

Probably the most exciting thing about the 128D is its built-in 1571 disk drive, a sleek And that's good news be double-sided drive that fits cause it breaks down nicely into the low-profile the artificial system box. It has the capacity to run CP/M software around ten times faster than the sluggish 1541. Data storage capacity is also much increased: 410K formatted when in CP/M mode. That makes it a much more attractable proposition for users put off by the 1541's lousy performance.

Existing 128 owners, though, will be a little miffed by the 128D, since the 1571 drive is still not generally available as a

they've had to make do with • High Street hi-fi giants, 1570 model.

Business bargain?

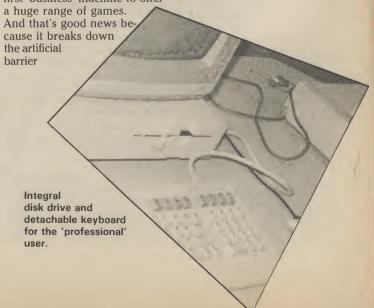
Despite using pretty old technology, the 128D is one of a new generation of micros that exploit the wealth of whilst the PC20 (20MB hard business software running disk) is being priced at £1,799. under the CP/M operating system. Similar machines include the Amstrad 128 and PCW 8256.

Of course the 128D's other attraction is its 64 compatibility, making it perhaps the ciates. first 'business' machine to offer

the ugly looking single-aided Laskys, has just announced that it is to sell the Commodore PC10 and 20 machines in its 30 largest shops.

> Commodore has reduced its price specially for the occasion. So the PC10 (dual 5.25 disk drives) comes in at £1,199,

> Colour versions of both models will cost around \$400 extra. Laskys will also sell you software, add-ons and free installation through micro maintenance experts, Mills Asso-

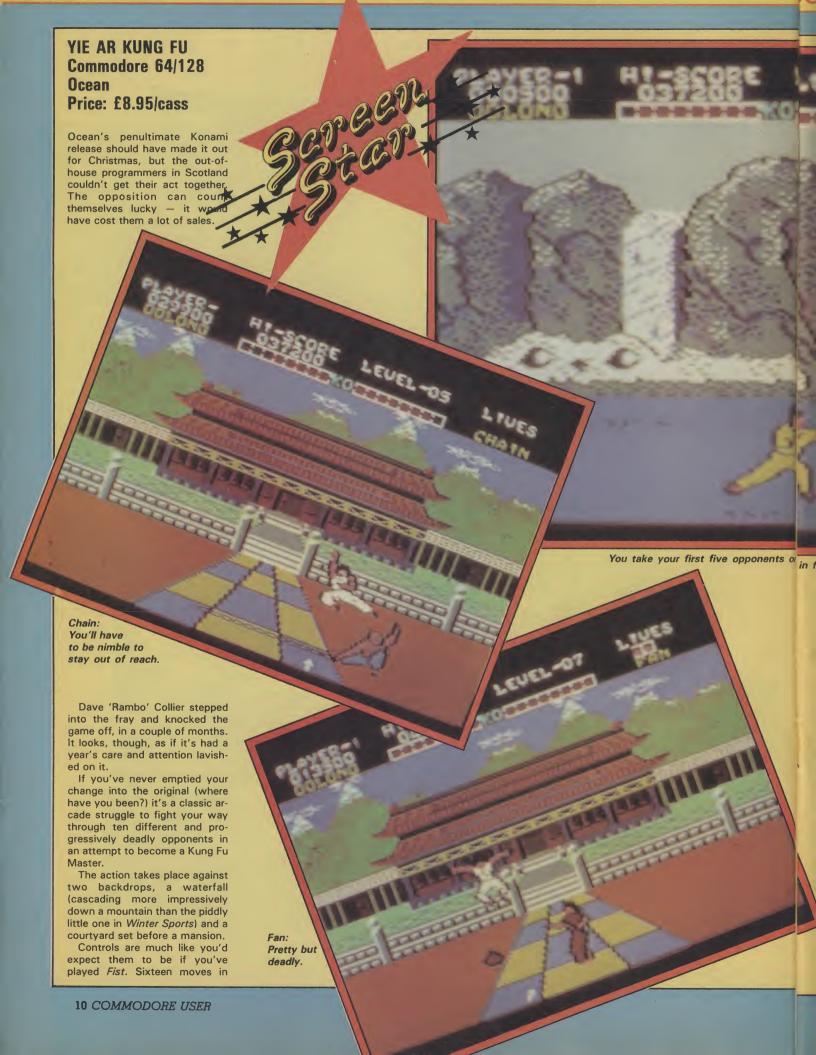




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AVAILABLE ON ATARI 800 XE, XL DISK (£14.99) AND COMMODORE 64 CASSETTE (£9.99) AND DISK (£14.99)
From selected branches of Boots, W. H. Smith, John Menzies, Lasky's, Spectrum Greens, Woolworth, Littlewoods and good computer software stores everywhere





on in front of the waterfall. This is Nuncha with the nasty rice flail.

two modes. Eight joystick positions to punch and manoeuvre and eight more with the fire button depressed for a crippling selection of blows. Each strike earns you points, the highest score being awarded for the flying kick.

The similarities to Fist end right there. If Melbourne House's game is the software equivalent of David Carradine's TV 'Kung Fu' then this is 'The Water Margin'. As Oolong, the hopeful young pretender, you'll be bouncing around the screen with phenomenal leaps and bounds tackling an array of eccentric opponents.

What really sets this apart from the mighty Fist and the other martial arts games is the speed of the thing. Yie Ar Kung Fu will give you a sore trigger finger and aching wrists. It's much faster than the Konami original. I know because the Ocean boys made me play their arcade machine. I can work my way to the end of the original but not on their conversion - not so far anyway.

I promise you as well that you

won't want to rest until you've Several punches beaten the lot. It's not easy, and kicks must find even the programmers struggle their target to defeat at the final opponent. Add to this the giant on the nine different sets of music from third level. Martin Galway and you're looking at an impressive all round

There's no need to feel you've got to disregard this because you've got Fist. It stands up on its own. Slightly smaller figures (they're only three sprites high to Fist's four) are made up for by equally compulsive gameplay and brutal toughness.

Here we have a conversion that's even better than the arcade original. Now, where's the elastoplast. . .?

YOUR OPPONENTS.

BUCHU: Fat and stupid. More of a gentle introduction to set you up for what's coming next.

STAR: A hard woman this one. Not only is she a bit useful with the moves, but she throws those wicked looking kung fu stars.

NUNCHA: Flails viciously with the nunchaku rice flail. Hit and

POLE: Wields the ancient rod of Bo (wasn't she in 'Ten'?). If he

traps you he'll pin you down. A change from the coin-op version. CHAIN: The reach on this guy is a major problem. Timing your attacks is essential if you want to stay alive.

FAN: Deceptively deadly, Fan is pretty and cute as a tarantula on a birthday cake. Flings fans that do a lot of damage.

SWORD: This man's danger doesn't need much pointing out. Stay out of reach if you don't want to end up as nouvel cuisine.

TONFUN: Fights with flailing sticks. Is skilled and very fast. BLUES: The big man himself. A Kung Fu Master in his own right. Your toughest opponent.

1P-001600

PLRYER

Mike Pattenden

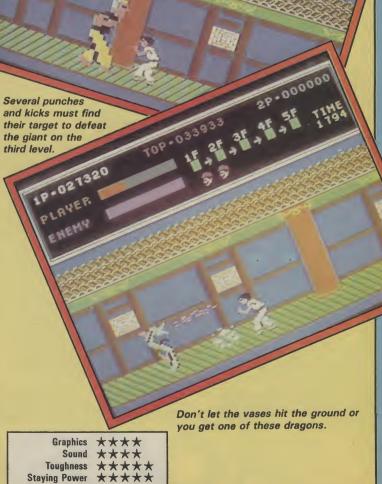
KUNG FU MASTER Commodore 64 **US Gold/Data East** Price: £14.95/disk £9.95/cass

The era of the combat game continues. This one, based on the coin-op of same name, makes no attempt to challenge in terms of graphics or animation. Instead the emphasis is on all-action gameplay. Pretty successful it is

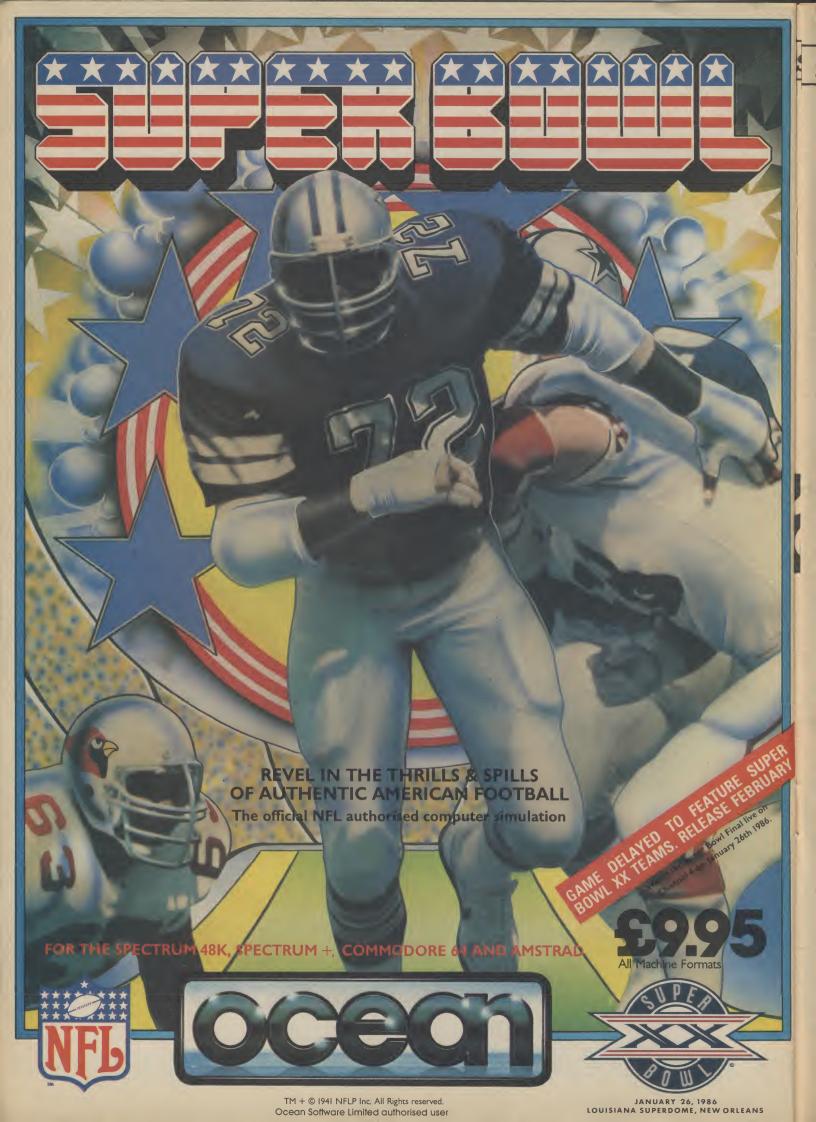
The idea is to progress through five floors of a temple in a bid to rescue a beautiful captive maiden, yawn. Naturally the enemies become increasingly

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continued on p. 13



Value



How do you take on a dwarf?

continued from p.11

vicious and numerous on each floor. You have to destroy them all using an array of kicks and punches.

What makes the game different is not the range of attacking moves at your disposal this is pretty limited - but rather the number and variety of the enemies arranged against you. Many of them are destroyed with just one or two kicks or punches and smashing your way through half a dozen in quick succession is somehow much more satisfying than the usual prolonged combat against an individual.

The range of baddies is formidable:

Henchmen are the easiest. They approach you like zombies, and if you fail to knock them out with a single blow they will cling to you, sapping your energy.

Knife-Throwers take two blows to be killed, and in the meantime you'd better duck or leap over the knives they throw. Falling Vases can be shattered with a single kick, but if you miss, they hit the ground and an indestructible snake crawls out.

Dragons will emerge from falling balls unless you can hit the ball in the air.

- Dwarves can only be hit by a squat kick or punch. They have a nasty habit of somersaulting on-

to you.

- Killer Bees attack you at varying heights and must be despatched with an appropriate kick or

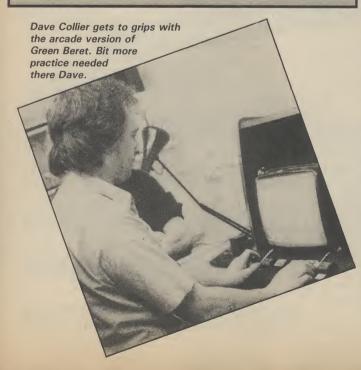
- Guardians. There's just one of these on each floor guarding the stairs to the next.

With all this going on it's not surprising that the graphics aren't sensational. The characters are all fairly small, and your hero hobbles along with a serious leg injury right from the start. The sound too is fairly rudimentary with not much more than a short rhythmic tune and the odd thwack sounding just a little like the sound tracks of most Kung Fu films.

Never mind, I enjoyed Kung Fu Master a good deal, and that's despite being a gentle and peaceloving person.

Chris Anderson

Graphics	***
Sound	***
Toughness	****
Staying Power	****
Value	****



KONAMI'S BARMY ARMY

'm heading towards a pub called 'The Place Next Door' to shoot some pool with a large contingent of Ocean's programmers when Martin Galway takes a small diversion into an arcade. "You've got to see this, I can't stop playing it, it's great!" he enthuses.

pound. You have to storm across the screens and free them before they get shot.

En route you encounter hordes of enemy troops. To begin with you're only armed with a knife, but later along the way you'll pick up a flamethrower, bazooka, and arenades.



Programmer Dave Collier with musix wiz Martin Galway and Steve Whalid (left to right).

The game in question is Gauntlet an Atari coin-op that allows potentially four players at once to get involved. "I've got an Amiga at home at the moment and I'm going to work out a way of doing this," he says enthus-

iastically.
"What", I wonder aloud "is coming next, though?"
My question is answered back at Ocean after I've sampled the arcade versions of Mikie and Yie Ar Kung Fu in Martin's little sound studio.

Dave Collier enters with a brown paper package, unwraps a circuit board and shoves it into the arcade machine that stands in the corner, its innards spewing everywhere.

A tap of the one player key and all is revealed. It's Konami's Green Beret. "We've signed up another deal," smiles Dave Collier. "I can't wait to get started.

In case you've never heard of Green Beret, it's a kind of rightwards scrolling Commando. To describe it like that though, is an insult to the game. It's much better than Capcom's effort.

The object is to rescue four prisoners who await a firing squad, tied to posts in a com-

Among the enemy troops number paratroops, kung fu soldiers and dog handlers. The final test is a unit of men armed with wicked flamethrowers. Graphics and sound are brilliant. In fact I'm sure it's going to be enormous.

Dave Collier turns round to director Paul Finnegan. "How long have I got on this one then?" he asks suspiciously. "Oh loads of time, Dave, at least six weeks."

If the job Dave Collier has done on Yie Ar Kung Fu is anything to go by he'll do it, and he'll do it well.

The Ocean all purpose arcade machine. Guts spewing out



COMMODORE USER 13

Commodore 64 Chart

This chart is based on the MicroScope chart as compiled by CaRlup

GALLUP

MicroScope is the weekly trade paper of the microcomputer molastry. If your computer stors cover 1 depth to the state of the microcomputer when the state of the sta

Chart Chat

This month we bring you the only professionally compiled C16 chart around. All because the constant flood of letters we receive from you demanding one gave us no choice. And look who dominates the top six positions, Mastertronic!

Watch out for big changes soon. Expect Elite's *Commando* to shoot to the top and stay there for a long time.

Vindicated! Over on the 64 chart Rambo has knocked Commando off the top. And you doubted our word! Nice to see Kane our budget game of the month doing well already.

Watch out, though, for Yie Ar Kung Fu, set to explode on to the scene right now. Our other screen stars will do equally well and Ocean may well have a fight on their hands with Hewson's classic shoot 'em up, Uridium.

(1) Rambo	
Commando	Ocean
Winter Games	Elite
Last V8	Epyx/US Gold
Moronis Rift	Mastertronic
Rock 'N' Wrestle Mercenary	Activision
Kane	Melbourne House Novagen
Little Computer People (10) Kik Start	Mastertronic
Jen. Stall	Activision
Jouinger	Mastertronic
They Sold a Million Summer Games II	Gremlin Graphics Hit Squad
right Night .	Epyx/US Gold
Now Games II	US Gold
Action Biker	Virgin
(18) Transform	Mastertronic US Gold
Way of the Explodi	Ocean Ocean
NEW Goonies Exploding Fist	Melbourne House
	Datasoft/US Gold

General C16

1	Commando	Elite
2	Yie Ar Kung Fu	Imagine
(3)	Rambo	Ocean
4	Winter Games	Epyx/US Gold
5	They Sold A Million	Hit Squad
6	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
(7)	Way of the Exploding Fist	Melbourne House
(8)	Computer Hits (10)	Beau Jolly
9	Action Biker	Mastertronic
(10)	BMX Racers	Mastertronic

1	Big Mac	Mastertronic
2	Tutti Frutti	Mastertronic
3	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
4	BMX Racers	Mastertronic
5	Rockman	Mastertronic
6	Squirm	Mastertronic
7	Kung Fu Kid	Gremlin Graphics
8	Vegas Jackpot	Mastertronic
9	Thai Boxing	Amco
10	Beach Head	Acces/US Gold



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THE EIDOLON Commodore 64/128 Activision Price: £9.99

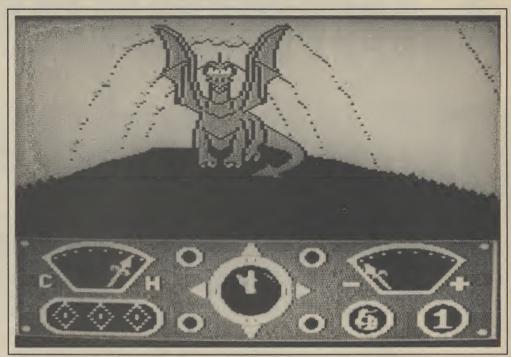
Late one night on your way home you happen to pass by the eerie mansion of Dr. Joseph Agon, who happens to live in your neighbourhood. Being the careless type, he has left the front door wide open and you being the nosey type decide to take a butchers round his gaff.

In the living room, just behind the settee, you discover The Eidolon — a sort of space/time machine invented by Agon over a hundred years ago. Fortunately it was built to last and after tweaking a few knobs and levers you find yourself in a strange and mysterious world of cavernous mazes.

This is where the story ends and the game begins. Making your way around the labyrinth you must collect three jewels one red, one green, and one blue. Of course it's not just a case of pick them up and thankyou very much

First you have to find them and there are a few problems there, namely trolls, rotoflies, puffer birds, etc. These little beasties complicate things by bumping into The Eidolon and draining it's energy reserves. If all the juice runs out you end up back in Dr. Agon's living room — i.e. game

The creatures can be thwarted by firing spheres of energy at them. These come in four colours (a very colourful game this) red, blue, green and gold, and



Oh dear, he doesn't look too pleased, better hop it.

can be found hovering around the maze.

Different coloured spheres have different powers. Blue ones give you more time by freezing The Eidolon's clock and gold spheres recharge your energy reserves. The green spheres have the power to transform one creature into another and red ones are essential for destroying the guardian of the jewel.

Once you have a jewel in your possession you must travel to the end of the cavern where you will find a statue of a dragon.

If you picked the right coloured gem the dragon springs to life

and you must destroy it with a multi-coloured energy sphere cocktail.

If Dr. Agon's diary is to be believed there are seven levels, beyond which lives a dragon of truly horrendous proportions.

What sets The Eidolon apart from the numerous other maze games around is the structure of the maze and the quality of the graphics.

The maze actually looks like an underground cavern rather than the familiar breezeblock structure. It's also possible to turn by degrees and move in any direction which certainly adds to the

sense of realism.

Ken McMahon

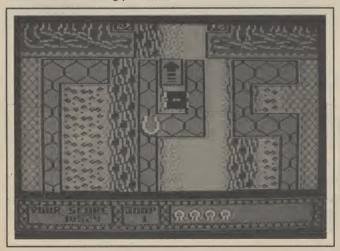
Graphics ****
Sound ***
Toughness ***
Staying Power ***
Value ****



BOUNDER Commodore 64/128

Gremlin Graphics Price: £9.95/cass

Bounder - ''infuratingly addictive''.



Funny, this game comes to me with the firm recommendation of another magazine stamped on it. If I was less charitable I'd say . . . well it's a good job I am feeling charitable today.

And what a horrible game it is! No don't rush off, I mean that it's left me foaming at the mouth, chewing bits off the carpet and clutching clumps of hair. You can take it as read then, that this is infuriatingly addictive.

The idea is simple and as far as I know original. You guide a tennis ball hopscotch style over a series of platforms set high up above the ground. Missing a platform results in your ball disappearing over the edge and plummeting earthwards until you hit the ground cartoon-style with a little puff of dust.

Bouncing around the slabs isn't as simple as it sounds. An

endless supply of meanies drift about and lurk in wait. Contact with most causes you to pop and lose a life. It really is as simple and beautiful as that.

It's all a case of trial and error of course. Each time you have to get a little further just to see if you can improve, just to see what's coming up as the screen scrolls lazily along.

Graphics are neat and colourful, and the scrolling is smooth and staggered giving you a sense of the depth of the canyon below you. And the tune just aggravates the whole feeling of irritation when you fail. And fail you will — many times!

When you consider there's a useful little game on the other side of the tape (*Metabolis*) then this all adds up to a package well worth having. Besides which, who the hell needs an Amiga to

HARDBALL Commodore 64 US Gold/Accolade Price: £14.95/disk £9.95/cass

Oh boy, American sports fans are going to love this. Admittedly there are already three baseball simulations on the market, but this one makes the rest look prehistoric.

Somehow it manages to combine both the management and action aspects of the game without compromising either. Especially memorable is the animation of the pitcher and batter and the way that pitched deliveries are depicted.

The view for this key part of the game is from behind the pitcher. You see his back, while facing you is the batter and behind him the catcher and umpire. If your team is in the field you have to decide what kind of pitch to deliver and in which precise direction. There's a total of over 40 combinations, ranging from Fastballs to Sinkers, Sliders and Change-Ups.

What's remarkable is that each different pitch is depicted slightly differently on screen. For example, if you select a high Curveball which you want to swing away from a left-handed batter, that's exactly what you'll see happen. From the point of view of the pitcher the skill is to maintain a good variety and keep the batter guessing.

When you're batting the problem is to spot what type of



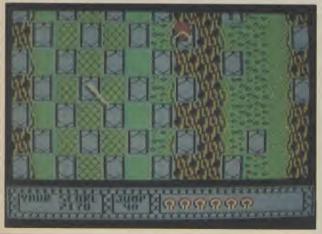
Above. Lean back and take a swing

Right. A flash of light bottom right as our star makes a home run.

delivery it is as early as possible so that you can respond accordingly. You have the option of swinging high, low, inside or outside by moving the joystick at the appropriate moment. But if you can see the ball is wide it's best not to swing at all — if you do and you miss a 'strike' is recorded against you. Three and you're out.

As in the real game, splitsecond reactions are the key.





Bounder is like playing hopscotch on Mount Everest.

create a bouncing ball when you've got Bounder?

Mike Pattenden



There is also a strong element of bluff, especially when you're taking on a human opponent instead of the computer.

If the batter connects, the view switches to the part of the field where the ball is moving. If you're fielding you can move the nearest fielder to the ball and then throw it to one of the 'bases'. The view immediately changes to the relevant base to give a close-up view of whether the ball or batter arrives first. This constant flicking between screens gives the impression of televised coverage and is very effective.

What isn't so effective is the way the ball moves when thrown by an outfielder. It starts incredibly slowly but then suddenly speeds up in a manner which would make Isaac Newton turn in his grave. A pity that, but it's

about the only thing about this game that's shoddy.

If the action part of the game isn't enough for you, you can start getting involved in the management side — selecting a team, substituting players, fielding individual players in the most appropriate positions etc. Various statistics are supplied to help you make sensible choices.

Incidentally, if baseball is new to you, the program instructions do include a summary of the rules of the game. It's well worth getting into, and this program, without question, is the best way of doing so.

Chris Anderson

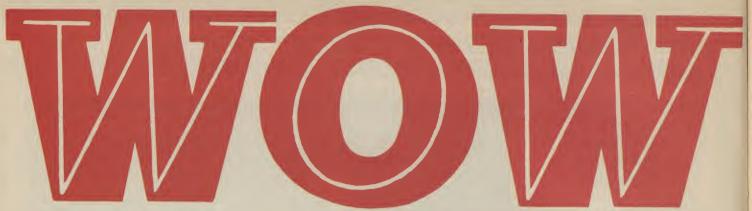
Graphics ****

Sound ***

Toughness ***

Staying Power ***

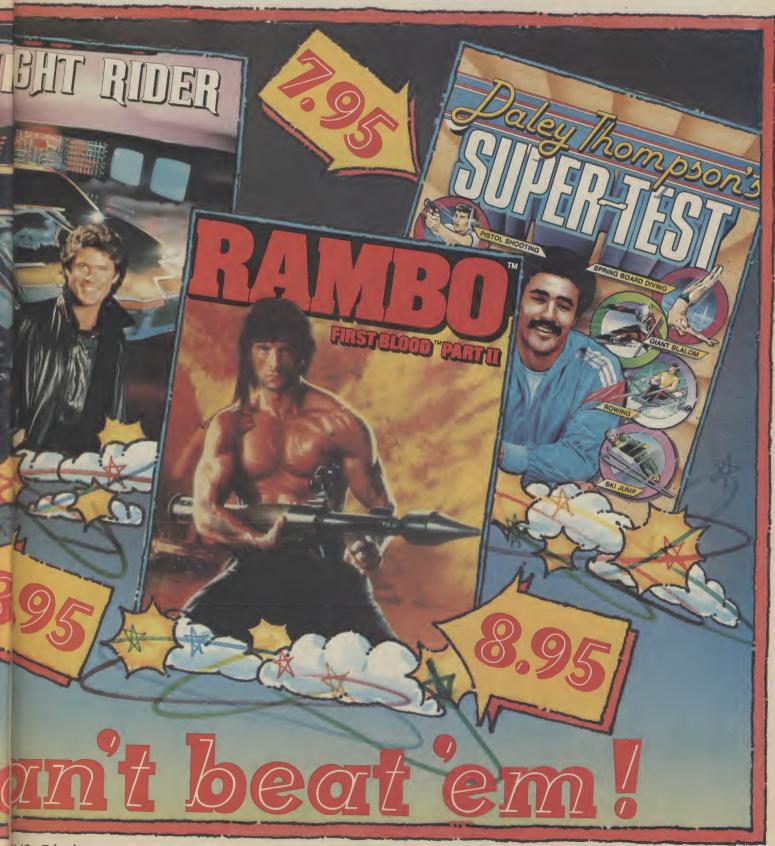
Value ****





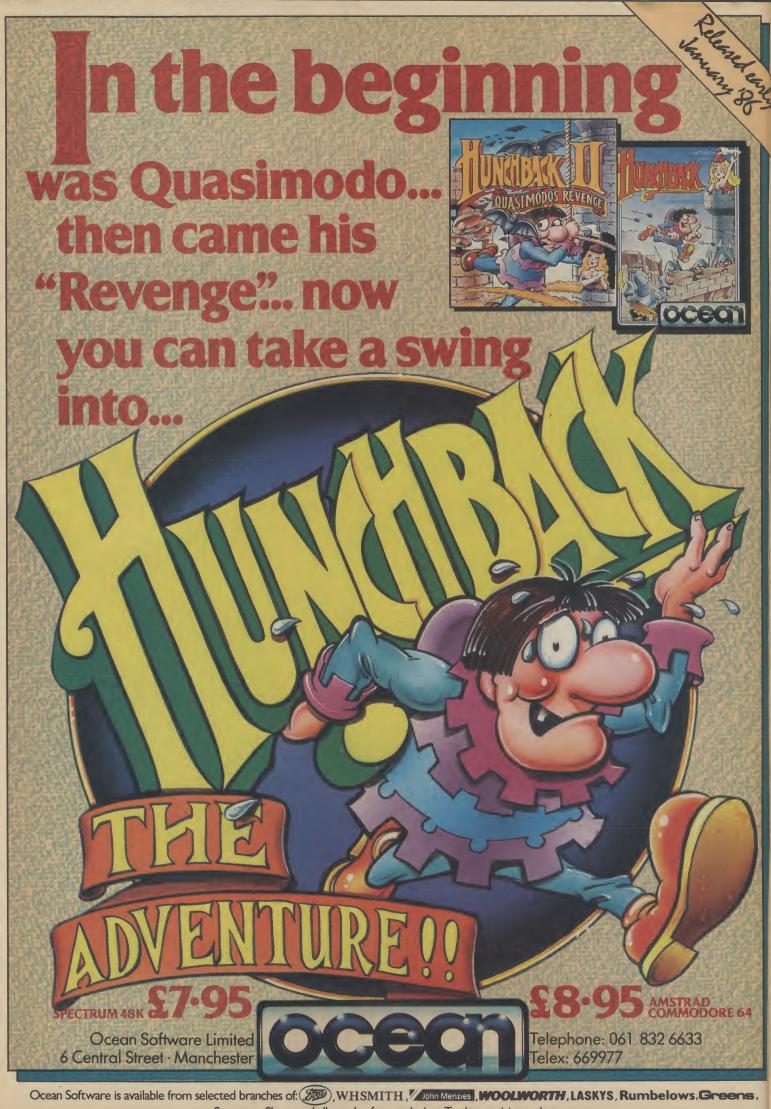
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it to dig up the graves scattered around the play area to win extra lives. Caution needs to be employed here though as you might just dig up a ghost. There are plenty of these hairwrenching puzzles in Dragon

the same place.

There are plenty of these hairwrenching puzzles in Dragon Skulle and certainly the game is the toughest of the Pendragon series. Apart from its toughness it loses out by comparison with

and then back onto the screen to

ensure that he will always be in

The shovel comes in handy and is worth finding as soon as

you start the game. You can use

some of its predecessors. The graphics are not as pretty as *Entombed* and *Blackwyche* and you would have thought by now, that Ultimate would have done something about the appalling animation of Sir Arthur. If anything it's worse than ever in this episode.

I can't recommend this game. The challenge is a tough one but very uniteresting. A disappointing conclusion to what was a very good series of games. Best Pendragon game is still Blackwyche.

Eugene Lacey

DRAGON SKULLE Commodore 64/128 Ultimate/US Gold Price: £9.95

Sir Arthur (yawn) Pendragon is at it again. After battling the nasties in *Staff of Karnath*, journeying to Egypt in *Entombed*, and sailing the high seas in *Blackwyche* until — undaunted — he arrives on a hostile island, home of the evil Skull of Souls.

Ultimate have been dragging out this tale a bit too long. I can't be the only person who has become less than enthralled by the latest instalments in the continuing saga of Arthur Pendragon.

Rather like a once-good soap opera that has gone off the boil Pendragon games arrive with dreary regularity. Please Ultimate let it end now.

Part four of the saga does actually offer a new game play mechanism — icons. These picture symbols are used by Sir Arthur to select certain tools, like the magic cloak and shovel.

In order to select these tools you have to move a finger pointer on screen by pressing the space bar. This means you have to sit quite near the 64 when playing the game — not too comfortable for this type of drawnout arcade adventure.

I'll give you a tip to get you into the game as the first puzzle is fustratingly unintelligent. What you have to do to get beyond the skull guarding the entrance to the underground complex is walk to the left until you can touch the star fish on the ground. This lifts the skull to let you enter.

It's now icon time as you select your 'Magical Orb'. This is actually your nasty-zapper — and there are plenty of them too, as you would expect from Ultimate. These take the shape of Jumping Eyeballs, Wasps, Devils, Warriro Ants, Skull Bats, Salamander Archers and Dragons Eggs.

Your first major hurdle is a fire spitting Dragon who is belching



flames at you from across a bridge. Several direct hits are required before this beast disintegrates so that you can pass.

A nice early shoot 'em up this — which boded well for the rest of the game.

The enjoyment was not sustained for long though when, soon after — I arrived at an apparently insurmountable obstacle. Another bridge — with four scrolling screens to the left, and to the right — both ending in dead ends. You have to get across that bridge. To do this you have to shift the skull blocking your path and — just one more tip, you can blast away at the nasties until the cows come home and the skull will still be there.

What you have to do is shoot the fierce native who is lobbing spears at you from the other side of the bridge — not once but eight times. To do this you can use the usual trick of dodging off

Graphics ★★
Sound ★
Toughness ★★
Staying Power ★★
Value ★

Above: The Dragon blocks your path and requires several direct hits to kill.

Below: To get the shovel fire a Magical Orb at it.



The Adventures of

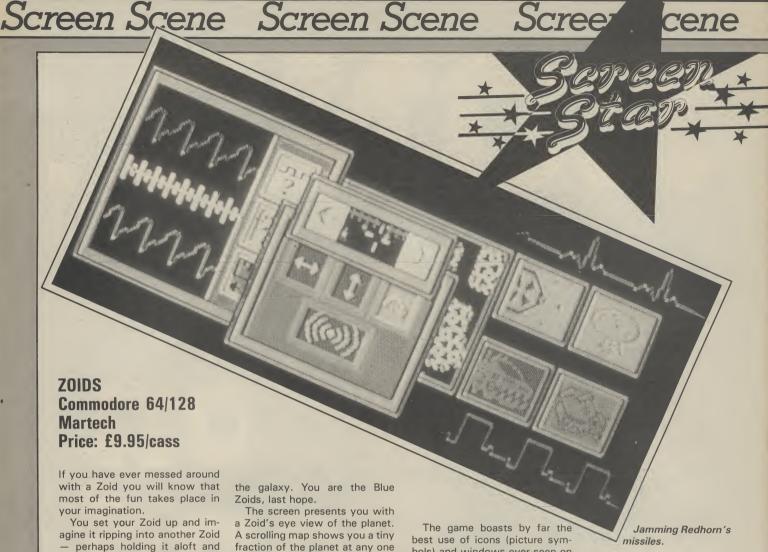
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other — like the fight scenes in those dinosaur films.

Twenty seven year olds like me used to do similar things with

making screeching noises as you

do so. Vivid pictures are conjured

up of the Zoids tearing at each

our Action Man dolls way back in Pre-Zoidic times. I know, I know, you are too old for either Zoids or Action Man but all I am trying to say is that it

needs to be a damn good game, or damn good anything for that matter, to compete with the images created by your imagination. Which is probably why films of the book usually disappoint.

But let me say right away that Martech have achieved that difficult task with flying colours in Zoids — the computer game.

ZOID WARS

The action takes place on the planet Zoidstar where, after the collapse of a mighty Zoid empire, the Zoids turn on each other as supplies of Zoidar fuel began to disappear.

Without repeating too much Zoid history there are basically two types: Red ones — led by Redhorn the Terrible — and the Blue Ones led by, you guessed it, your good self.

Once Redhorn has defeated all the blue Zoids and captured their cities he intends to re-conquer

The screen presents you with a Zoid's eye view of the planet. A scrolling map shows you a tiny fraction of the planet at any one time as you slowly explore it, seeking out Red Zoids, their cities, power installations, and communications centres.

Before you can goad Redhorn into battle you must first rebuild the Mighty Zoidzilla — who you will then take into battle.

Eight pieces of this mighty Zoid are hidden in certain Zoidstar cities. Your information scanners tell you the likelihood of a piece of the Zoid being present in percentage terms.

Using the information scanners is an essential part of the game because if you wander around attacking cities willy nilly then you will be set upon by hordes of Spinebacks and Trooper zoids.

Zoidstar is a pretty huge planet and you would be wise to make a map.

All of the cities are in contact with one another and they are monitoring your movements and passing this information around.

If you do decide to attack a city it is therefore wise to take out its communications tower first.

But this alone is no guarantee of keeping your conquest secret as Hellrunner's are dispatched as soon as a city is attacked, and there is also constant movement of Slither's around the planet. As well as transporting materials, Slithers carry information between cities.

The game boasts by far the best use of icons (picture symbols) and windows ever seen on a 64 game. An expensive piece of business software running on Amiga or a Macintosh is the nearest comparison for these graphics — only the business software would not be nearly as much fun.

It will take you quite a while to master all the icons and their uses. There is the jamming system, for example, that can be used to jam Redhorn's sonic or thermal missiles. To do this you first of all have to position your on-screen pointer over the jamming icon, press fire to make the jamming window unfold, and then match your waves to the missiles waves as closely as possible.

It is learning the sequence of selection that is the difficult bit. Well part of the difficult bit — because jamming, and the successful use of missiles is pretty tricky too.

But don't worry about these two devices for the time being — you only really need them for destroying cities and taking on really powerful Zoids.

RAIL GUN

Beginners can get a great deal of fun out of exploring the planet and attacking weaker Zoids with your Rail Gun. This is a good old shoot 'em up screen where you wrestle to get a Zoid in your sights, score a good few direct hits, and watch it go up like a pile of fireworks.

The good thing about the icons is that they are not just useless frills but they serve a purpose — of getting you quickly into the required piece of animated action.

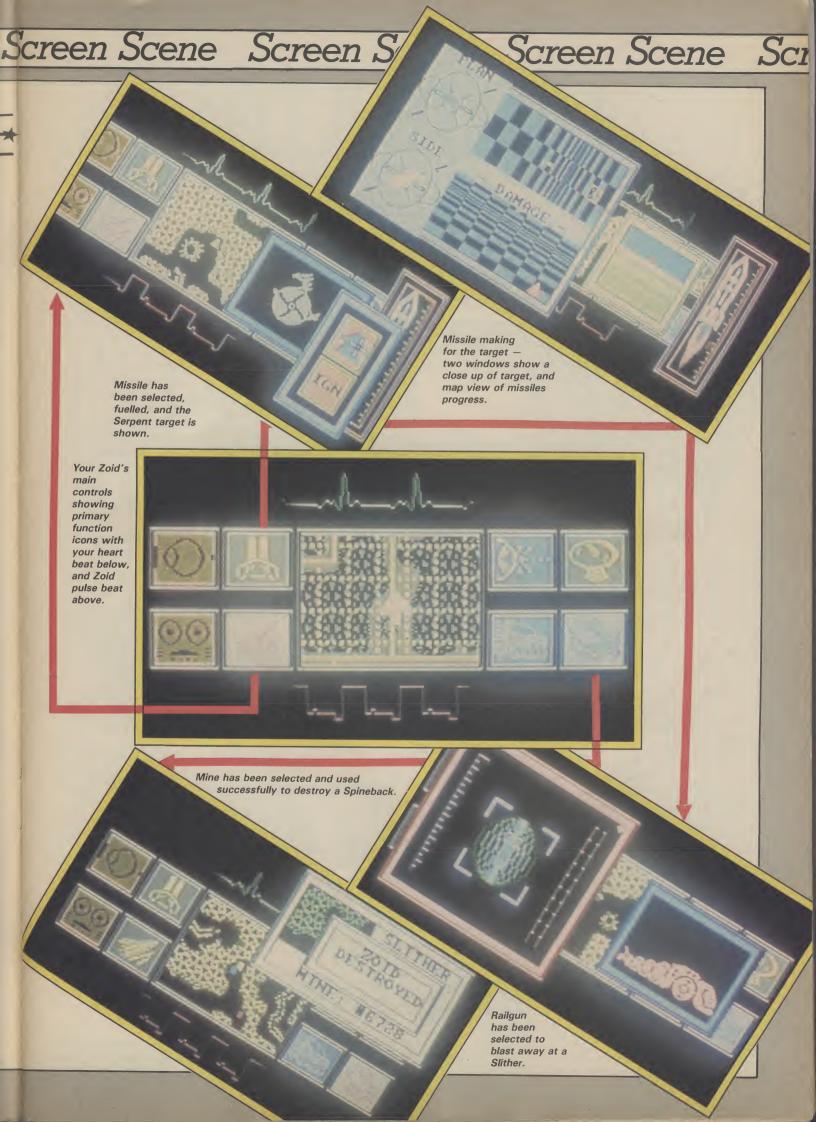
All the time you are playing the game you are presented with messages. For example as you approach a city a window opens to inform you that "Six Spinebacks approaching to defend city". That is your signal to reach for your missiles.

There are several different types of Zoids — and you will need to learn their relative strengths as quickly as you can so that you can decide when to turn to run and when to fight.

Get the impression I like this game? You bet I do. It has everything — great action screens, strategy, music by Rob Hubbard (he of the Last V8, Commando, Monty on the Run, and Master of Magic) and graphics which . . . well just look at the screen shots.

Eugene Lacey

Graphics	****
Sound	****
Toughness	***
Staying Power	****
Value	****



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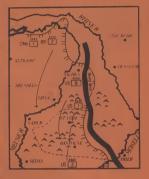
D-DAY & THE NORMANDY CAMPAIGN

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Allies withstand the offensive or will they be humiliated as the crack Panzer divisions push them into the Channel?

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1 Space Helmet brings George under your influence. 2 Cup of coffee — freezes George and the bully.

3 Book of love poems

— read these to Lorraine.

4 People icons go green when you are influencing them.

5 Guitar will make Lorraine stand still.

6 Skateboard gives you the speed you need to make things happen at a the right time.



BACK TO THE FUTURE Commodore 64/128 **Electric Dreams** Price: £7.95/disk

Back to the Future is like playing one of those games with the tiny ball bearings in a little glass container - just when you think you are about to get your last ball bearing in place one of the other ones rolls off its position and you have to start again.

Back to the Future is very similar as you have to try and keep all the characters in the same place for long enough to get them to do what you want them to do - in this case, fall in

For that one reader who hasn't seen the film yet (this is for you, Mum) it goes like this. You are Marty, cute American teenager who travels back in time to the year 1955 in the 'Doc's 'time machine.

When you get there you find icon (picture symbol) selection.

yourself at the same high school father.

Its down to you to play cupid yellow. and get them to fall in love. If you fail you might never be born.

are not too favourable. It would useful half minute, the space suit be easy to form the opinion that makes your Dad (George) follow the game is just another third you, and the guitar will freeze rate film game which is definitely your Mum (Lorraine). not the case.

and determined to pair your Mum volume of love poems which, and Dad off and escape back to when taken back to where your the future in the nuclear powered Mum and Dad are, will get them DeLorean.

Apart from you and your towards each other. parents there are two other characters in the game — Biff the the screen shot above. These are bully, who will punch you any made up of eight strips each. chance he gets and generally spoil your plans, and the Doc who can help you by getting rid start to lose control the strips of Biff.

Marty is controlled by a com-

Marty walks left, right and foras your Mom and Pop - great ward through doors by simply you might think. Trouble is your moving the joystick in the re-Mum takes a fancy to you and quired direction. He can move isn't at all keen on your future faster by selecting the skate board when its symbol flashes

There are four other icons that come in handy. The coffee cup First impressions of the game can be used to freeze Biff for a

Once you have George and Once you get the hang of it Lorraine in one place you can go you become completely hooked to the library and select the feeling a bit more affectionately

There are also two pictures in When you are doing well the pictures begin to fill in, but if you peel back again.

In order to make your escape bination of joystick control and back to the future you will have to fill in both pictures, then race back to the Doc's room, enter, come out again into the street where the car is waiting and hop in. The rest the program does for

There is also a musical reward for success. If you do well, the theme from the film -Power of Love - begins to play, but if you lose control again, the 64 starts bashing out a very fast rendition of Johnny Be Good.

The acid test has to be - does it stand up without the film? I have no doubt that the answer is

It really is fun, and difficult, to keep all the characters under control. You need lots of different icons to affect the behaviour of each character and each icon - once selected and used — will only last for a short time. This means that the game is a race against time. A bit like one of those circus acts with the plates spinning on the poles with the guy racing around trying to keep them all spinning.

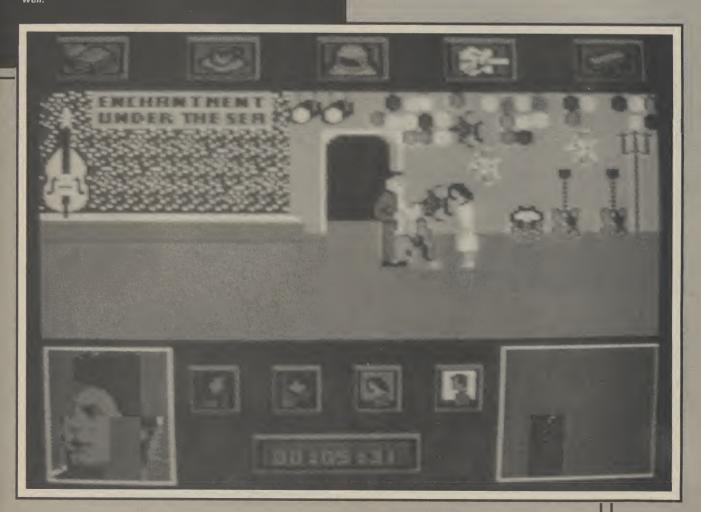
The one niggling doubt at the back of my mind is the game's staving power. Once vou've escaped you may not wish to play again.

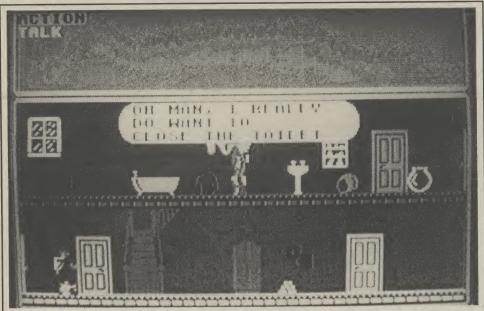
Eugene Lacey

Graphics Sound **** Toughness *** Staying Power Value ***

Inside the sandwich bar - a good place to fall in love.

Photographs in the bottom corners fill in when you are doing well.





THE YOUNG ONES Commodore 64/128 Orpheus Price: £7.95/disk

Totally brilliant concept! A game based on the anarchic cult comedy programme The Young Ones. Crazy! Fascist! Snot! Willybotrot!

I was a Young Ones fan but it's funny how when you write it

down the humour starts to sound a bit weak, a bit, well, childish. That's a problem, but perhaps not as much a problem as trying to get the humour over in the first place.

Mosaic had a good stab at it with Adrian Mole, but that was done on an adventure format. It was based on a book and hence quite texty. Orpheus' effort at the Young Ones tries to do it as an arcade style adventure, sort of Wally style. The result is a disaster.

The idea behind the game is to play one of the characters and collect seven or eight items that will enable you to move out of the house. You control your character via screen options. Thus at every occasion you pull the joystick back to select action, speech or walking. You have no real control over movement apart from setting it off.

The worst part is the other characters just wander around saying the same things about objects. "Nobody move until Mike

Ha, what a scream! Toilet! Brilliant humour guys.

the coolperson picks up the thermos flask'', is not funny especially after endless repetition.

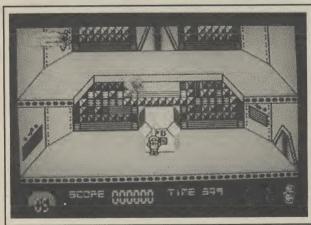
My character (Vyvyan) just kept saying things like "I've got a really bad hangover, and all I can think about is picking up the guitar case". I took this as a prompt so I got him to pick it up, whereupon he wanted to put it back again. OK, redherring — but it's just not fun, nor is it compulsive.

After exploring the various locations which are graphically average and getting bored picking things up and putting them down to try and get things to happen I started to wonder if I was doing this all wrong. Now I'm certain that it was Orpheus who did it all wrong. They had a good idea but were completely unable to implement it.

Elite had a great idea with Scooby Doo but couldn't get it working and shelved it (turn to Hotshots for an update). Orpheus should have done the same thing, perhaps there was too much at stake.

Mike Pattenden





Conceptual humour in Spaced Out, whoops, ruined the joke!

SPACE DOUBT Commodore 64/128 CRL Price: £9.95

Space doubt, geddit? Funny software from CRL. Their latest offering comes complete with a little comic for you to read while waiting for the game to load. The comic follows the adventures of the crew of the U.S.S. Omnibus and it's mission to transport a cargo of food to the hungry

workers of the planet Niblondis.

As tends to happen in these stories, The Omnibus is barely 200 light years from earth when it comes under heavy bombardment from a meteor storm. But the meteor storm is not all it appears to be and is in fact a swarm of dreaded bogloids — they live to eat.

The bogloids break through the hull of The Omnibus and make straight for the cargo hold wherein are stored the food supplies for the hungry workers of Niblondis.

Commander Sock, Colonel Skvijibod, and Major Underpant are in turn awoken from cryongenic sleep to blast the Bogloids, but only Underpant survives to complete the mission and land on Niblondis. The only problem is that by this time the Bogloids have eaten all the food that hasn't been blasted.

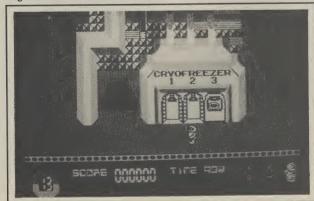
Space Doubt is one of the most enjoyable comics I've read since they put up the price of The Beano. I stayed with it through to the last page. The graphics are very good indeed, though it's a bit of a shame they're only black

and white. The game on the other hand is pretty boring stuff. It more or less follows the story in the comic, you taking the role of each of the three space heroes. Unfortunately, five minutes of blasting Bogloids against different backgrounds and I was dying of boredom.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	***
Sound	**
Toughness	***
Staying Power	**
Value	**

Bagloids in the freezer. Stick to the comic.



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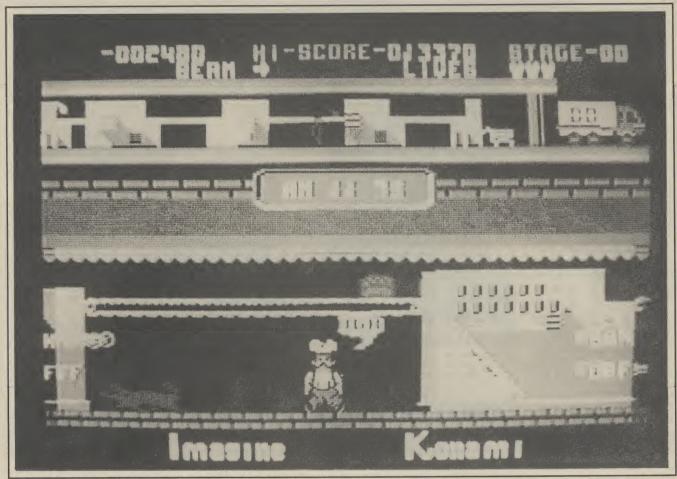
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Comic Bakery - Joe tells you what he thinks of the game.

COMIC BAKERY Commodore 64/128 Imagine Price: £7.95/cass

Another in the Imagine/Konami series and before I say anything else let me tell you this is by far the worst yet!

You play the part of Joe the baker, who has to protect his loaves from the bread-snatching Raccoons. If you think this sounds remotely interesting you would be wrong.

As the game loads you will see a pretty title screen with some excellent music which may sound familiar if you own either Rambo or Transformers. There are no game options at the start other than "Press fire to play".

The screen is divided into two halves: on the top you have the scanner showing which machines you must turn on (because the trouble-making raccoons have turned them off) on the bottom half is you, Joe the baker, looking like a fat over-paid chef. This part of the game is wonderfully drawn with great use of colour. Your job is to save the factory with the aid of your ''Racoon-Stunner''!!

The pests come from three different directions — left, right and above. They are all shootable but an extra bonus is earned by stunning the ones on the lower level and kicking them across the floor. This is by far my favourite part of the game.

The ones at the top pinch the loaves of bread which are rolling from machine to machine. Although I loathe the flea-bitten

Blast the Racoons to stop them scoffing your bread.

creatures I must admit they are graphically perfect.

Another nice touch is when Joe bumps into a raccoon, which makes him jump, and double-up as if he had received a baseball-bat in the groin.

When you have helped so many loaves of bread to the safety of the van, a screen is shown with a picture of a bakers shop, which gives you a rating such as "Yeh" or "Fine". While you sit there wondering what's next,

don't bother, I'll tell you, absolutely nothing! Just the same boring stuff with a change of colour.

One word sums this up. As baker Joe so rightly says, "UGH". I couldn't agree more.

Ferdy Hamilton

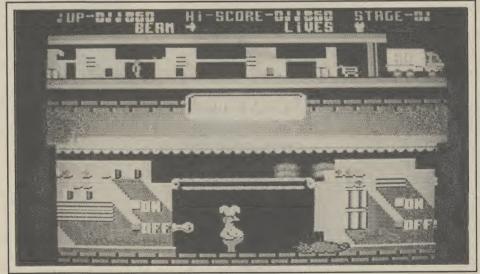
Graphics ***

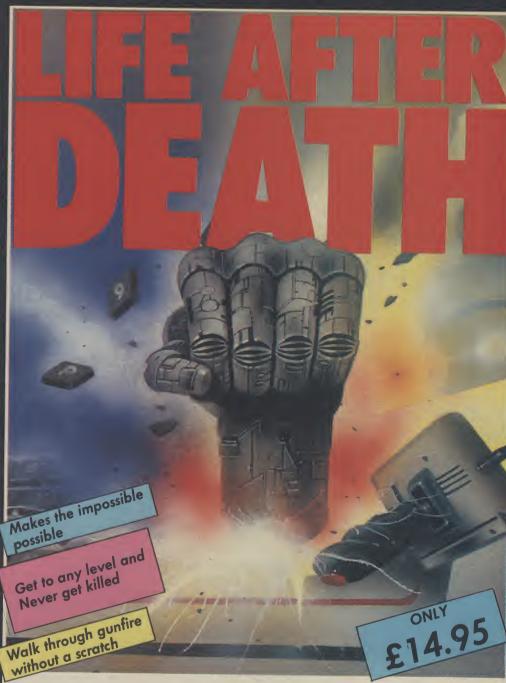
Sound ***

Toughness **

Staying Power

Value **





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- A. A revolutionary powerful cartridge that now lets you play all those impossible games without being killed! Walk fearlessly through gunfire, disaster and danger without a scratch.

Q. Sounds difficult.

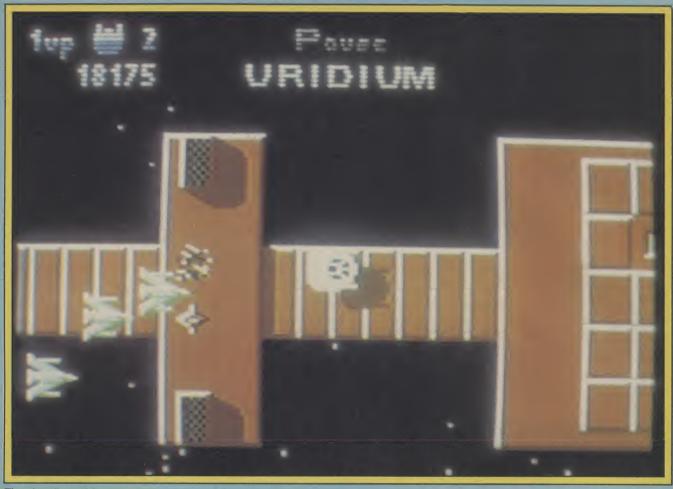
- A. It's simple. Just plug it in the back of your computer and press a button.
- Q. You mean I can play my games all the way to the end. I don't believe it!
- A. Yes incredible but true! It works on all those thousands of games with sprite collision.
- Q. Sounds like science fiction! I suppose it's available in 2001.
- A. It's here now!
- Q. I'll believe it when I see it!
- A. Exactly, so why don't you go to your local computer shop.

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There's a fleet of fighters on your tail. A quick direction switch should shake them off.

URIDIUM Commodore 64/128 Hewson Price: £9.95/cass

This is it, a shoot 'em up so good you feel as if you should be inserting two ten pence pieces into your 64 before each game.

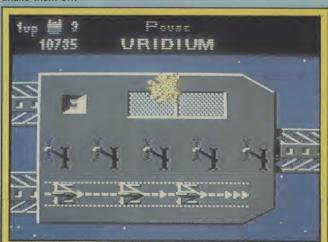
It really is just like blasting away on a coin-op. Programmer Andrew Braybrook is happy to acknowledge that *Uridum* has its roots in pay per play arcade games.

"I suppose it's a derivative of Defender, Scramble and half a dozen other arcade games all rolled into one".

The aim of the game is to destroy sixteen space fortresses that are cruising slowly towards your home planet. The fortresses are called Super Dreadnoughts — each one taking its name from a different metal.

They are all at least sixteen scrolling screens long and each is protected by dozens of smaller fighters.





Aaaargh! Zapped by a mine! Once they home in on you they're hard to shake off.

Paradroid fans will spot an instant likeness as Andrew Braybrook's trade mark — shiny metal, is very much in evidence on each of the Dreadnoughts.

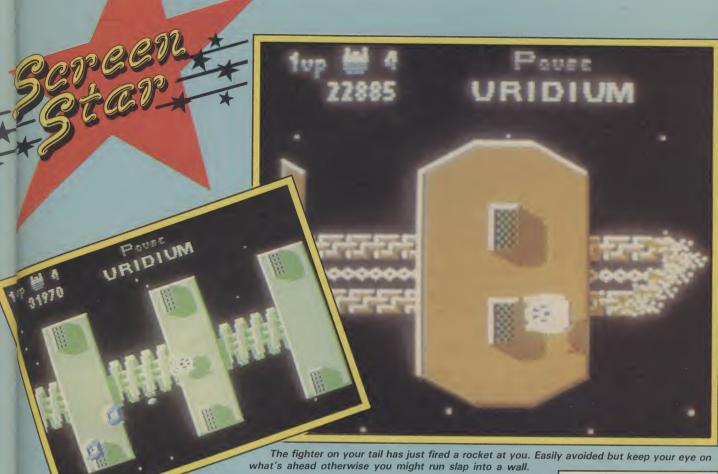
When you see the quality of *Uridium* it is difficult to believe that less than a year ago Andrew didn't even own a 64.

When you press to begin you are treated to an excellent piece of animation as your Manta fighter emerges from the interplanetary transporter, flips around, showing its wing span

and then — zoom — it bursts forward and homes in upon a Dreadnought at full speed.

In seconds a wave of fighters sweeps past you. You fire like crazy but are lucky to down any of them on your first few attempts.

Bonus points are awarded for downing the Dreadnoughts protection fleets so you about turn and give chase. It becomes clear that manouevering the Manta is not easy. Pretty soon you are swaying back and forth in your



seat as you struggle to turn in Games league at the beginning of will be pretty dull without it. time to blast the enemy.

But the Dreadnought's Protection Fighters are not all the Manta pilot has to worry about. There are also the deadly homing mines which come at you from the flashing generator ports. The only way of dealing with these is to beat a hasty retreat.

To destroy a Super Dreadnought first of all you have to land on it. To do this you have to wait for the "Land Now" signal to flash and then fly to the extreme right of the Super Dreadnought where you will find the

When you touch down you pass into the fuel rod chamber where you can select 'Quit' or your bonus. Either way, you have to leave the chamber before the countdown reaches zero.

When you take off you fly as quickly as possible away from the vapourising Super Dreadnought - strafing any remaining surface craft as you go.

On later Dreadnoughts there are certain ships that can only be destroyed after the Dreadnought starts to vapourise. This means that you will have to be extremely sharp on the joystick to earn bonus points at that level.

The shoot 'em up was the last '86. But here it is - a shoot 'em type of game you would expect up better than anything that has to make the running in the Best come before that your collection

Eugene Lacey

Graphics **** **** Sound Toughness **Staying Power** Value ***

A level completed and the dreadnought disintegrates. Head back and pick off any targets you missed.



You'll probably be seeing a lot of this screen.

Should you lose your craft you have the chance to get another, by flying off in a jet pack in search of a replacement pod. The controls here are even more difficult, and for some reason you become a delicacy for worms which pop up from the ground. You'll certainly have to master this if you want to get any further with it, because your ships disappear like nobody's business and the fact that you cannot blow up obstacles exactly make this fast trigger stuff either.

Graphics are clear if a little on the small side, but the sound is poor. Bad sound effects and lousy tune. It mightn't look so duff if it weren't for the fact that I'd been playing *Uridium* constantly before I got round to this. There again maybe it would.

If you want a really tough challenge then this will give you one, but I don't like games which substitute imagination for niggly controls.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics ***

Sound *

Toughness ***

Staying Power **

Value **

CRITICAL MASS Commodore 64/128 Durell Price: £8.95

Critical Mass has that look about it that suggests it might be quite good. Looks of course can be deceptive.

The action is set on an asteroid where an advanced anti-matter conversion plant has been occupied by aliens after a surprise attack. Your mission is to fly in and disable the plant before the aliens can destroy it and cause

an enormous black hole. OK it's just the plot.

You do this by flying east in your craft, avoiding rock mases alien defences and mines, penetrating the plant wall and taking out the guard posts. Sounds like a super fast shootout eh? Well it's not. The reason for this being that control of the craft is so finicky - the one directional stuff like in the old asteroids - that you have to proceed at a snails nace to avoid hitting the obstacles. This however also makes you a sitting duck for the enemy forces. Swinging the ship round to line up a target is a laborious struggle.

Back to base in your Jetpack for another ship.





Death Wake: A major retribution to the war against software piracy.

DEATH WAKE Commodore 64/128 Quicksilva Price: £8.95

Quicksilva are being remarkably reticent about their latest weapon in the war against software piracy. Stunningly effective, yet so simple it's surprising no one thought of it sooner. In Death Wake, Quicksilva have managed to produce a game that is so boring no one in their right mind would want to copy it.

A battle simulation straight out of WWII, the objective is to penetrate the enemy's defences and blow up their atom bomb factory. First you must complete the air assignment phase. A map shows the location of your own

and the enemy bases. You can mount an attack on any enemy bases from up to three of your

Having made the strategic decision as to which bases you will attack pressing the scramble button causes three little puffs of smoke to appear on the map, thus putting the enemy bases out of action for a while. The computer/enemy then does the same to your bases. If this sounds the slightest bit exciting then I've been overgenerous in my description of it.

Now it's time for the torpedo planes. Your battleship, The Undaunted, sits at the left of the screen flanked by two escorts. Three torpedo planes appear at the right and approach The Undaunted, as you shoot at them. They drop their torpedoes and, with a nimble flick of the joystick (it doesn't really have to be that nimble) you swerve out of the way. This goes on for about two minutes then it's back to air assignment, which appears after each arcade screen.

Next up are the torepedo boats which you must fire at before

they fire at you. A bit more difficult than the planes, but no less boring. After another bash at the air assignment, mines. The mines scroll on from the left and you steer The Undaunted out of the way. The battleships which follow are refitted torpedo boats and the bombers are identical to the torpedo planes except they go on for ever.

At this point I switched channels on the t.v. It was The Monday Matinee -The Spanish Gardener with Dirk Bogarde. A slushy sentimental job with Dirk as the gardener who forms a friendship with his boss's son and ends up in the nick on account of being framed by the jealous butler. Not really my kind of film, but a million times more enjoyable than playing Death Wake. (er thanks Ken we reckon anything with Dirk in it's OK -Ed). Ken McMahon

Graphics ★★★
Sound ★★
Toughness ★★
Staying Power
Value ★

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Commodore 64

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Screen Scene Screen Scene

KANE Commodore 64/128 Mastertronic Price: £1.99

I've not always been that enamoured with Mastertronic's output, preferring to think that you're better off hanging onto those two sovs for a better cause. Until now that is.

You may remember our review of Ultimate's Outlaws a few issues back. Well here's a better game all round that weighs in at a quarter of the price.

The action takes place across four screens each taking a typical - well sort of typical western scenario for its inspira-

You are Marshall McGraw a Wild West hero, charged with the task of making peace with the Wagari Indians (nice nonracist touch). Long-term peace however, is jeopardised by the machinations of the NAST railway company who plan to drive a track right through sacred Indian burial ground.

As McGraw you have to keep the natives sweet whilst fighting off a variety of renegades and mercenaries hired by the NAST Railway Co.

Your first task is to win the

respect of the Wagari. Strangely down hordes of tasty ducks. Should have a Jack Charlton you're shooting the little blighters down with a bow and arrow not a 12 bore.

Good shooting earns you peace medals and it's these tokens of Indian esteem that you have to get back to the President to conclude the peace, though the sound a stricken duck makes should have been reward enough Ifeel

So you rush off from the duck shoot, mount your horse and charge across the plains to Kane. This I found to be the most difficult bit because if you miss time a jump you're painfully unsaddled. If you make it to Kane you can expect an ambush by the local hired ruffians. '(Thought: if they liked soul music would they be called the Kane Gang?)

Defend yourself from the attack, by dodging about picking men off. All their actions are designed to stop you getting that train outta town to Washington intact with the peace medals. Race to the depot and try and grab that train before it's out of

> Right: Marshall McGraw on a duck shoot.

It's the time when a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do.

This game has got enough acenough, this is done by shooting tion in it to fill a John Ford western. It's addictive and it's fun. The sound effects are more licence on it. Well perhaps, but than adequate and the graphics are clear and colourful with smooth scrolling. McGraw's bow action and the horse's galloping are particularly good.

At last I can honestly say two quid well spent.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics *** Sound **** Toughness ***
Staying Power *** Value ****







Screen Scene Screen Scene



TALES OF THE CAT Commodore 64/128 Budgie Budget Software Price: £2.99

First impressions of *Tales of the Cat* are not too favourable. Oh no, not another Frogger rip-off is the first thought that enters your head when its crude graphics first appear on screen.

You have this busy road with cars whooshing by, the cat can prowl left and right and attempt to cross the road. But apart from that — there ends any simularities to Frogger.

The aim of the game is to pick up the articles on the other side of the road. These are a compass, scroll, fishbone, can, tin opener, a mouse, and some bird seed.

Once you have picked something up by simply nipping across the road and making contact with it you can give the big black dog the slip and go on to the next screen.

Each new street is an even tougher challenge for our unfortunate moggy. Screen two, for example, has a rather awkward break dancer, screen three some falling flower pots — and so it gets worse.

Each new hazard is added to the ones from the previous ones so that before very long you are dodging cars, dogs, falling flower pots, breakdancers, and falling milk bottles as you attempt to pick up your item.

To be honest *Tales of the Cat* is not the best game I have ever seen — the animation is not convincing and the game is pretty easy.

In its favour *Tales of the Cat* would be highly suitable as a game for young children.

But for hard nosed gamers

looking for a worthwhile challenge on the cheap then don't expect to get it here. Even an average gamer would crack this in an afternoon.

Eugene Lacey

Graphics	**	
Sound	**	
Toughness	**	
Staying Power	**	
Value	**	

COLLAPSE Commodore 64 Firebird Software Price: £1.99/disk

Collapse is Firebird's latest offering in their budget software range. It is an arcade game with a difference, and the idea behind it is something very original.

On the first screen you are presented with a matrix of dots. In the middle of it there are a pattern of grey sticks.

The object of this weird and wonderful game is to turn all the grey sticks blue and then to collapse them, all in one go if possible. That may sound all very straightforward but playing the game is a different matter!

You take the role of Zen, who luckily is a magician — but not all the time. There are two modes of play: When Zen has magic, and when he doesn't. When he has magiz Zen can float and sprinkle Magic-dust which kills the time-eating monsters.

Why doesn't he keep his magical powers all the time? . . . Because he can only turn the sticks blue when he has no powers. (Obvious really — Ed.)

But of course as in any game there are other hazards. You have a time limit, and there are time-eating monsters, who will gladly drain one hundred units of your precious time. These monsters are easily stunned with a sprinkle of your magic dust.

When you time limit runs out

Tales of the Cat - not the Budgie's best bargain.





Collapse -Firebird's latest introduces original ideas at a bargain price.

let you go until you've retrieved the lost amulet of immortality.

This is your cue to head off into the maze of caverns with only a few leaves from your maths book stuffed in your pocket to map your way with.

Naturally there are hordes of nasties hungrily awaiting your entry into their territory among whose number are hellhounds, skeletons, orcs, bats and vampires.

As you explore you will find clues and useful items such as healing potions, and scrolls that furnish you with information.

The screen is split into three different areas. Top left shows a birds' eye view of your movements with the caverns unfolding as you progress. Top

ith the price of the average 64 game now hovering around the ten pounds mark, budget games are now a popular alternative. As the demand grows so the quality has improved.

This month we begin a regular section devoted to the the cheaple and find that we have a game so good that we nearly made it a Screen Star. Instead Kane is our first Cheapo of the Month.

As the big software houses whinge that budget games should be excluded from the charts, Commodore User says they're often a lot better than expensively produced turkeys beefed up with a costly licensing deal.

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F the the the the the stand

you lose one of your three lives. If you complete the first sheet you will come to another, which has a different pattern of sticks. After that there's only ninetyfour to go! It is possible on all of the ninety-six sheets to collapse all of the sticks on one go, although I haven't managed that. Collapse is a good and very

playable game, which proves that good games can be produced at pocket-money prices. Well worth buying.

Ferdy Hamilton

Graphics	**
urapnics	XX
0 1	A A
Sound	**
	, , , ,
Toughness	****
Staying Power	****
otaying rower	^ ^ ^ ~
Value	who who who while
Value	++++

MASTER OF MAGIC Commodore 64 Mastertronic Price: £2.99/disk

Mastertronic's range of games gets bigger and bigger every month, and as the catalogue increases so does the quality. This month's selection of cheapies have all been excellent.

Master of Magic is a slice of arcade adventuring that even Ultimate could learn a few things from. The plot has you dragged underwater by a powerful hand whilst exploring some underground caverns. It could happen to anyone! The hand belongs to Thelric, master of magic and evil, and he refuses to

right is the printout which tells you exactly what's happening, ie The hellhound bit you'.

The centre space is a menu which allows you to choose from a set of options (normal adventure type things like examine, run, attack). At the bottom of the screen you're given a close-up of whatever confronts you, be it a door or a nasty.

But the problem with this display is that there's rather too much going on. The birds' eye view of your movement would have been better off expanded to cover a little more detail so making the bottom area redundant, whilst the information display scrolls too quickly when there's a lot happening. Nevertheless you get used to it all eventually.

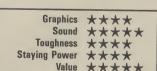
The gameplay is nothing

THE HELLHOUND ATTACKED THE SKELETON ATTACKED YOU WITH ITS DAGGER. RUH. INVENTORY ATTACK EXAMINE

Master of Magic - "humming the tune all the way home".

special for its type, but it's good enough, and for three guid it's great value.

I must put a paragraph aside to rave about what is one of Rob Hubbard's best pieces of music yet. It's original and it suits the style of game very well. And blow me if I wasn't humming the tune all the way home. Buy this game for a good tune if for nothing else!





COMMODORE 64 Killer-by

YIE AR KUNG FU

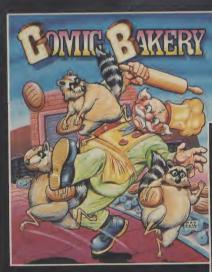
If you can master the ten moves, expect the unexpected and FIGHT for your LIFE against the formidable masters of the martial arts you may live to meet them again on the mountain or in the Temple.

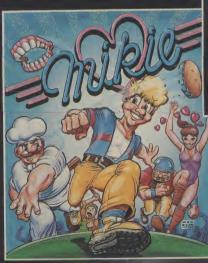
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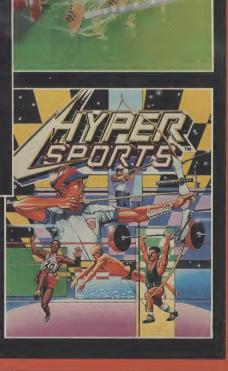
tes of fun

PING PONG

You can almost feel the tension of the big match breaking through the screen...the expectant crowd is almost on top of you! You return the service with a top spin backhand, then a forward back-spin, the ball bounces high from your opponent's looping, defensive lob...SMASH!...a great shot opens the score...but this is only your first point! Play head to head or against the computer in this, Konami's first and best table-tennis simulation.

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Screen Scene Screen Scene Screen Scene

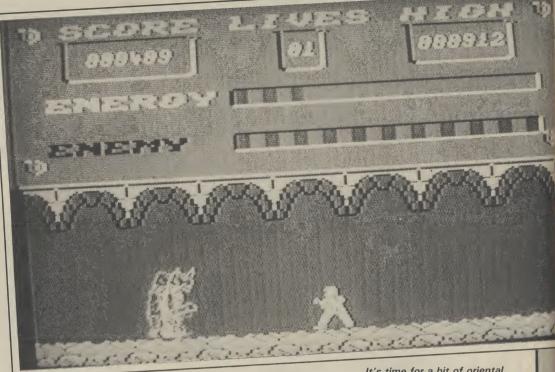
G 16

KUNG FU KID Commodore 16 Gremlin Graphics Price: £6.95/disk

Oriental fighting games have finally made it on to the C16 with this and Amco's Thai Boxing, but can you expect a decent Fist equivalent?

Emperor To Ming has banished you to the eighth skill level. Exactly why he has done this terrible thing is not altogether clear, but according to Gremlin it has been brought on by your own folly. That will teach you to fool around with the Emperor's daughter.

To get back to where you came from you must fight your way past eight different kinds of opposition, starting with the Emperor's minions.



You, The Kid, are standing in the middle of the screen dressed in what looks like a Windscale worker's overalls, but is I guess supposed to be a pair of kung fu pyjamas.

The minions attack from either side, but there are usually more coming from one side than the other. You have four options:

1: Stand your ground and let the

Toughness ★★★★

Graphics

Sound

It's time for a bit of oriental minion munching with the Kung Fu Kid.

GULLWING FALCON Commodore 16 Gremlin Graphics Price: £6.95/disk

I don't think there's ever been a good version of the Buck Rogers arcade game for the 64 let alone the C16.

Undeterred Gremlin come forward with their offering and it's certainly a toughie.

This is probably the most difficult game I've ever played on the C16. One thing's for sure, *Gullwing Falcon* is not a game for rookie pilots.

It's one of those 3D type games where you get the illusion of actually flying into the TV screen.

The object is simply to shoot down the invading space pirates. On the first level there are 25 of these, if you manage to reach the second level there are 35, and so on.

If the pressure gets too great you can fly between the pillars of stone, or so it says on the inlay. 'The pirate ships dare not travel between the giant stone posts'. Who can blame them? All it takes is one pixel in the wrong direction and splat.

I found it took all my energy and concentration to avoid smashing into the pillars of stone which zoom up on you at about warp 10. When I wasn't doing that, I was doing my level best to avoid colliding with the space pirates.

On the rare occasions when I wasn't doing either I actually managed to shoot one or two down.

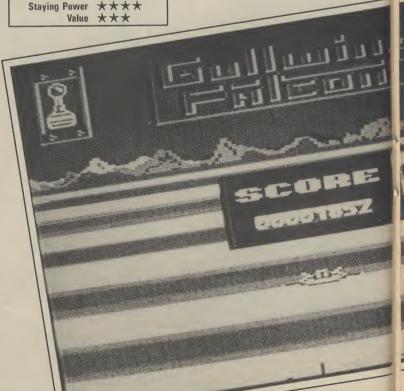
There's ninety-nine levels with a maximum of ninety-five aliens per level. Phew, that's trigger crunching in the extreme.

If there's one criticism I'd make it's that the joystick works the wrong way round. By which I mean that your ship goes left and right as it should, but when I pulled back on the joystick I expected it to go up and it did the opposite.

I reckon the programmers have done really well to get a 3D Buck Rogers type game out of the C16, but a game needs more than just technical merit.

If nothing else Gullwing is the kind of game that's so difficult it fires you with even greater determination to beat it. A must if you're looking for a really tough arcade challenge.

Ken McMahon



minions bump into you. This is not recommended. As well as being quite boring it will deplete your energy reserves very quickly.

2: Run away. Equally ineffective. Either the minions catch up with you, or you bump into those coming in the opposite direction. 3: Jump over them. This is O.K. for single, isolated minions. But if there are several you'll get caught on the way down.

4: Punch them. In 99% of cases the most effective way to deal with minions and of course the only way to score points. Timing is critical, mistime it and the minion will bump into you, further depleting your energy reserves.

Of course the most successful method is a combination of all four of these. When you've punched sufficient minions on the nose (indicated on the minion

meter) you get to have a bash at the next bunch

Future opponent could include various oriental nasties from any one of sharigans (what's a sharigan?), daggers, swords, or magical pots.

To tell the truth I don't know which, I got pretty fed up after half an hour or so of minion munching. The game just doesn't have enough variety or incentive, to hold your attention for long enough to accomplish anything.

If you're looking for a C16 version of *Exploding Fist*, you'll be disappointed with this.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	***
Sound	***
Toughness	****
Staying Power	**
Value	**

In keeping with our policy on the C16 there's more news and reviews in the mag than ever before to help out all you beleaguered owners out there. This month we've put together a software roundup set up a great competition along with our exclusive review of Commando and provided you with the first chart for C16 gamers. Look out for more next month.

WORLD SERIES BASEBALL Commodore 16 Imagine Price: £7.95/disk

As a C16 owner myself, I know how annoying it can be to see games compared with their C64 equivalents and, inevitably found lacking.

I wouldn't be doing it now, were it not for the fact that this version compares well in virtually

every respect with it's 64 predecessor.

Assuming you have two joysticks and at least one friend you can play against each other. If you lack the necessary hardware or company you can play the computer — a formidable adversary. I chose the second option and found myself batting at the crease, or home plate I should say.

You get an eagle's eye-view of the proceedings from a point just behind the backstop. Whilst this gives you an excellent view of the whole playing area, it's not very good for close up action.

For example, when you need to judge exactly when to hit the ball, you watch the giant video screen at the back of the stadium.

The normal rules of baseball apply. You get three chances to smack it one and make it to first base, or further if you can.

I found batting the most difficult operation of all. The direction of the ball seems to be controlled purely by timing rather than joystick direction. Nine times out of ten I was caught (by the same fielder) and if that didn't happen I just hit it straight back into the hands of the pitcher. Obviously more practice required there.

Once I had mastered it to some degree hitting a home run gave me as much pleasure as it must have Babe Ruth.

Fielding was much easier to pick up. As pitcher you have the

option of varying the height and speed of the delivery by joystick position.

You can try foxing them with a high, slow one, or give it to 'em fast and low with a left hand swerve. I only got hit out of the park once!

More usually, when the ball is hit, the nearest fielder is moved to it under joystick control and automatically picks it up. Again using the joystick you can choose which base to return it to. If you move and think fast you might just run somebody out.

The innings is over when three men are out and a match consists of nine innings per side.

World Series Baseball is every bit as enjoyable as the 64 version. It's great fun playing the computer and I can imagine it would be even better against a real opponent.

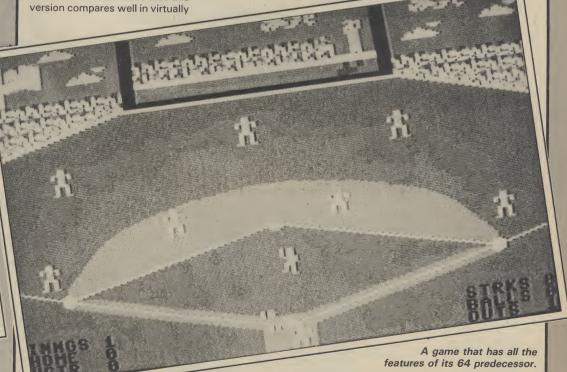
If you don't already have one I'd recommend you buy a second joystick at the same time!

Ken McMahon





A Buck Rogers game for the C16 with a really tough and exhausting test.





WINNERS RAMBO LOOKALIKE COMPETITION

"Don't push me!" OK, OK, I won't, but at least let me tell you about our Rambo lookalike competition - featured in the January issue.

We figured a lot of boring photos would be taken at Christmas. You know the kind I mean - Mum and Dad, and the kids, standing around the Christmas tree, looking down fondly on the new Trivial Pursuit Deluxe set.

Yuk — we just had to get a bit of life into those snaps so we asked our readers to dress up as Rambo for a chance to win one of thirty pairs of Rambo by Ocean and Commando and by Elite.

The response was, well, interesting. Dozens of you fancied yourself as Silvester Stallone's double, whipped off your shirts and reached for the

Here are some of the winners and before you start writing in we are sorry that there is not enough room here to publish everyone's picture. Maybe next time, in our shortly to be announced Madonna lookalike competition (C'mon you software houses howsabout a Madonna game).

A close second is Mark Jackson of Hucknall, in Nottingham. Mark strikes a mean pose and was the only entrant clutching a grenade. Nice touch, Mark.





Stephen Oakley wins a copy of Rambo and Commando for his excellent greasy chest and scars. I am not sure what you are doing holding that umbrella though, Stephen.

Geoff Capes Competition Results

We had so many entries to our December Geoff Capes competition we had to hire a strongman to carry the mailbags upstairs. Tricky question this time and only a select few got the answer completely right. The three names we wanted were: Brian Jacks, Frank Bruno and Graham Gooch.

Ten lucky winners get to flex their muscles with a pristine copy of Martech's Geoff Capes Strongman game. Congrats to: Matthew Skinner of Bath, Andrew Foster of E Yorkshire, James Banting of Portsmouth, Anthony Hughes of Mid Glamorgan, Michael Robertson of Formby, Marc Hagan of Merseyside, Neil Shepherd of Evesham Adrian Coutes of Bradford, Simon Chambers of London and Christopher Bloomfield of Welling.



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LAW OF THE WEST Commodore 64/128 US Gold/Accolade Price: £14.95/disk

Every so often talented programmers sit down and decide they're going to create a piece of software that's REALLY DIFFERENT, 999 times out of 1000 the results are disappointing. This program isn't the odd one out.

£9.95/cass

The idea is that as sheriff of Gold Gulch you have to maintain order through a series of 'conversations' with different members of the town's population. Depending on how you handle the chitchat you may find some of the characters pull a gun on you, in which case you have to respond with a lightning draw and blow the guy (or gal) off the street.

The encounters are depicted on attractively drawn (but motionless) backgrounds. All that moves are the characters you meet and your own right hand and gun, looming large at the left of the picture. The conversation is revealed in five lines of text at the bottom of the screen. The first line reports the words of the townsperson. The next four indicate your possible responses, with the one you select helping dictate how the conversation continues.

This multiple-choice approach means the game can be entirely joystick controlled. The trouble is it doesn't leave much room for skill. Much of the time you don't really have any reason other than idle curiosity to choose one response over another. And after playing the game a few times you're likely to have exhausted the potential of many of the conversations.

That leaves the shooting which, apart from having a nicely animated hand to look at, is also pretty uninteresting. A joystick movement brings the gun out of the holster and miraculously implants a cross-hair cursor on the screen. You aim and fire, so the only point of entertainment is

Superb title screen - shame about the game.

trying to predict when someone's about to draw on you and keeping your reaction time short.

There is quite a nice touch though, when you yourself get shot. The screen goes dark and all you see are bits of text reporting the conversation of other people saying things like: "Bring a doctor!"

Another big bore is that at the end of each conversation a new backdrop has to be loaded into memory. On the cassette version at any rate, this means having to

The number of western games currently available for the 64 mirrors the interest in them in the arcades at the moment. Whilst the quality of software is generally poor in this field, there are some great coin-op jobs about. If you've got a pocket full of change why not pour it into Express Rider where you ride a horse alongside a train firing at the travellers? Other titles include, Gunsmoke, a Clint Eastwoodstyle shoot out, or Bank Panic and Hogan's Alley, both a test of your reactions.

wait for about a minute every other minute. Hardly conducive to getting any momentum or excitement going.

If you can avoid a fatal shooting and make it all the way through the tape to sundown you get a screen which gives you a rating on seven different points including: how well you maintained your authority, the number of crooks you captured, how well you did romantically, the number of bad guys you shot, the number of good guys you shot, etc. This gives you a minor incentive to try again, but only minor.

The game lacks gameplay. Original, yes, absorbing, no.

Chris Anderson

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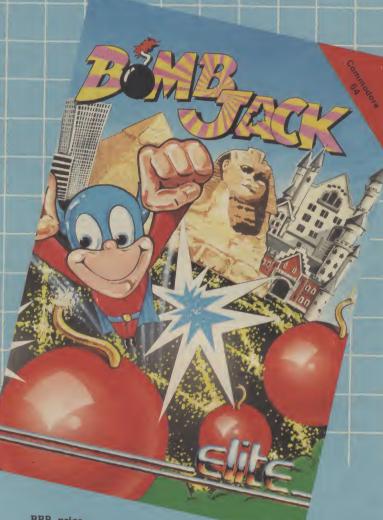






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Preview Preview Preview Preview



Look — everyone who has written about the Max Headroom game so far begins with either an intro or headline that goes something like: M-M-M-Max H-H-H-Headroom. Well I'm not going to, right. There is no way I am going to be accused of being stutterist.

Now on with the game. The tower block you see in the screen shot is the

home of Network 23 — ace reporter Edison Carter's employers.

Edison is searching the building for the black box which holds the Max Headroom Personality Generator.

To help him he has to hack into the Maxhunter computer that acts as his ears and eyes in the midnight search.

Edison must also establish control over the lifts by typing in code numbers and avoiding the security guards and

the hired assassins who work for the

evil hacker Bryce, Max's creator.

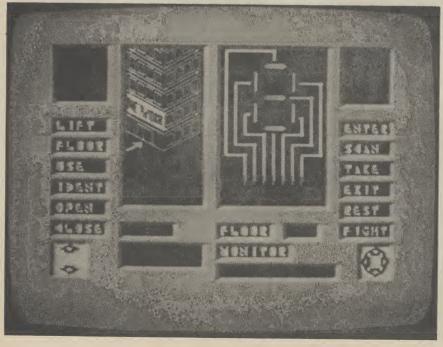
The game will be on sale in early
March and, don't you know it, we'll have a review in the next issue.

Can you tell us who plays Edison Carter in the film for a chance to win a pile of Max goodies including the

game and the book.

Entries to Max Comp, Commodore
User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon
Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

Exploring Network 23's office block.



Empire

Whispers are reaching CU of a new Gold Range game from

Our spy also tells us that they are talking confidentially about it being the

The game in question is Empire and all Firebird are saying about it is that it's a space trading game.

One of the reasons Firebird appear so tight-lipped about the new Gold games, and everything else for that matter, is that you can never get through to them on the telephone to find anything out.

You would think, wouldn't you, that a company owned by British Telecom would be able to sort out a few spare phone lines. You wouldn't - Oh well! More news on Empire (by carrier pigeon possibly) next month.

We've all suffered the horror and boredom of exams, possibly the worst aspect being the torture of revision. Surely the answer has to be in computerised programs that make life easier and refreshingly varied. Hill MacGibbon think so, since they've combined 'O' Level learning software with Pan's invaluable study aids. We asked a aroup of teachers and pupils their reaction to the packages

Maths Teacher's view

This package like the others in the same series contains a revision textbook and two cassettes. The software consists of two parts: diagnostic tests to assess performance and "learning modules".

The tests are certainly of an appropriate standard for 'O' Level and may be helpful for revision at the end of a course; however I am not convinced that the power of the computer is utilised at all.

The test questions are contained in an accompanying booklet, the student simply types in the answer (the questions do not appear on the screen). When all the answers are entered the test is marked by the computer and any incorrect answers

corrected. I can see nothing here that could

not be done in a good workbook.

There are several "learning modules", thirty in all. On the Commodore 64 each has to be loaded separately and always by using the menu program at the beginning of the tape, this is very tedious.

The modules vary in quality, again I feel they do not use the power of the computer. The examples given are too repetitive and do not really test application of the syllabus, a skill vital at 'O' Level. There are some nice diagrams but there is much room for improvement. Personally I would buy the book and not bother with the software.

Colleen Young **Croham Hurst School** S. Croydon

Students'

My pupils were not impressed with this program at all. Like me they were not impressed with the loading procedures. They found the presentation dull and not always clear. Also, they disliked so many instructions given in the booklet, they felt that more instructions on the screen would make the program easier to use.

If an incorrect answer is given a hint appears on the screen, these were rather variable in quality and several pupils found them no help at all. They would have liked a greater variety of questions, within each module there is very little

They found an incorrect answer in one section which did not do much for their confidence in the program. Another fault they found was that the computer regards and "A" as different answers for multiple choice, this they thought very unfair and quite unneccessary.



Bad marks for 'O' Level software from Croham Hurst students.

Faults like those mentioned above are most off-putting and children lose interest quite quickly even if the program content

French Teacher's view

The "Pan Course Tutors" package seemed to me a splendid idea since I have frequently recommended the Pan textbook. However, on closer inspection, this package is disappointing.

I was dismayed to find that my answers on the Present, Perfect and Imperfect tense sections were often deemed incorrect, only to be corrected with my original answer! Another problem is the use of accents which is indispensable in French. Duly warned that a missing accent means a wrong answer, I was unable to enter accents successfully using the notation given with the result that I scored 66% on a test which I had answered 100% correctly. Imagine the effect of such errors on a nervous examination candidate. In one case. I was given a totally erroneous

rule. Another irritation in this program is the inability to accept an alternative but

correct answer.
Sarah Williamson Croham Hurst School S. Croydon

Students'

Linguists are notoriously fussy but my pupils' reactions should also be con-sidered. Most felt that the presentation was good, although in one section pictures were missing and in another illustrated items were unrecognisable. (Time was wasted deciding whether Pierre was fishing or painting!).

The tests themselves were confusing mainly because the questions do not appear on the screen but in the manual. The tests could have been done just as

easily on paper.

In my opinion the program does not make a valuable addition to the textbook. The exercises given in the program do not seem to use the potential of the computer.



Physics Teacher's view

This package is based on an excellent revision book, but in practice things were unlikely to proceed so smoothly. For I feel that many of the middle or lower ability candidates will need help from their parents in reading and mastering all the initial instructions in the student guide.

The programs themselves still have a number of faults that need rectifying. A missing negative sign in one of the answers will cause great confusion. But that is nothing to the frustration I felt when I twice had to reload the program after getting trapped in a loop.

The learning modules would be greatly improved if all the necessary data for a question was shown in the screen diagrams — at present, data given at the start frequently disappears by the time you need it.

It would also save the user a great deal of time if he or she could simply move on from one learning module without having to reload the whole program. With the package in its present form its value is limited since a great deal of time is wasted loading the programs.

C.R. Whyatt MSc M Inst P Head of Physics, Heathfield School Surrey

Students' View

This is a tale of two packages: a very good revision book with clear, simple accurate instructions; and a slow, badly designed program.

The book is one of the high quality Pan Study Aids and stands alone as an excellent reference for exam revision. It is referred to throughout the software whenever the student is weak in some area of the work. The software, however, was a different story.

The system used old slow loaders — a bit dated in this age of turbos — and due to terrible tape management, each of the dozen or so modules required a complete reload from the beginning of the side!! The programs are also written in Basic which did nothing to compensate for the time already used in loading. The overall effect is that lengthy periods of potential revision time are wasted waiting for the software to load.

Perhaps the most disturbing feature of the software is the existence of bugs in the answers. In one instance, two virtually identical questions have alternately positive and negative results — a surplus minus sign being the cause for concern. Add to this the dull presentation of the software and students becomes VERY discouraged in their work.

Daniel Gilbert

Chemistry Teacher's view

My first gripe about this program is that it takes too long to load and there's no excuse for this, since turbo loaders are now almost universally used. Also, there's too much reference to the question booklet — students will have enough books in front of them without this. I feel the questions could have been put on the computer.

The book itself is quite good but a bit out of date — it's a 1981 edition. It is therefore missing some syllabus elements.

I also found the style of some of the questions confusing, but hints given by the computer were quite good when a question was answered badly.

My other major criticism of the package would be that a student trying to run through several modules has to reload each section of each module individually from the initial menu. If a large number of modules are attempted in one session, this can be a very lengthy process.

A. Andrews
Heathfield School
Surrey

Students' View

As with the other package I reviewed, this suffers from inadequate software support of a good revision book.

The presentation of the questions in this package, however, were confusing, as well as boring. In several places the questions are so badly worded that the student HAS to answer them wrongly in order to understand what is being asked, from the hints supplied.

Unforgiveable errors abound, too: in one place while the computer is printing and showing user inputs in lower case it requires the user to enter an upper case answer. If this is not realised, the user can become extremely confused when his answers are wrong despite confidence on his part to the contrary. In another the graphics are illegibly small whilst in another a "rubbish" sprite appears, obscuring part of the 'hints' screen.

As with both packages I used, the disastrous speed of program, loader and filing (i.e. menu) systems occupied more time than the revision usually did.

Daniel Gilbert

Hill MacGibbon/Pan Study Aids Software: Chemistry, Physics, Biology, French, Maths £14.95 8 Grafton Street, W1 Tel: 493 7070



Knight Games

It comes to something when companies start hypeing their next game before coming up with the one they had been promising for the last nine months.

We have become used to having to wait months for the games advertised in the magazines actually appearing in the shops but the delay in the launch of Elektraglide from English Software must be close to a record.

Certain magazines previewed the game on the basis of the Atari version four issues ago.

Well it is finally ready to be released. We didn't get it in time to review in this issue but from what we have seen, it does look pretty special.

Set in the future its graphics are reminiscent of *Pole Position* in terms of colours and landscape.

Unlike Pole Position, Elektra Glide is a race against the clock game. There are no opponents to get in your way.

But it's no push-over either as there are obstacles — including tunnels and huge balls — that loom in front of you.

Elektra Glide is also the first race game to introduce forks in the road. Imagine it, you are racing at full speed when suddenly you seek a fork. Which way are you to go?

The second game being hyped from the English Software stable is a medieval combat game called Knight

This features eight different quests: Sword Fighting, Duelling Axemen, Archery, Quarterstaff Bashing, Crossbow Shooting, Ball and Chain Flailing, Pikestaff Contests.

Knight Games can be played by one or two players and implements moves Fist-style — with different combinations of joystick positions.

Two new arcade conversions are being keyed as you read this at Elite's games workshop in sunny Walsall (sun — in the Midlands? — Ed).

Chief bottle washer for Elite, Bernard Dugdale, told CU that they are going to launch *Bomb Jack* in February and Ghosts and Goblins in March.

Bomb Jack is a 64 rendition of the moderately popular arcade game in which you play a tiny rodent collecting fruits in order, as you bounce around the screen.

Fans of the arcade original will be well satisfied with the accuracy of the conversion which — as you can see from the screen shot - includes the famous pyramids screen.

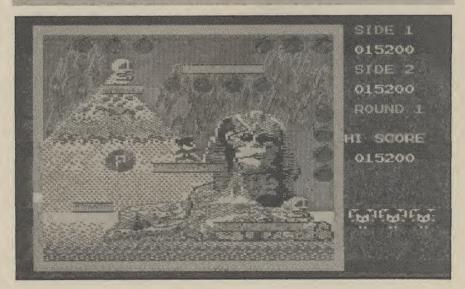
If Bomb Jack is not quite your cup of tea then Ghosts and Goblins may be more to your taste.

This one has been licensed from Capcom — those violent so an so's that coded Commando. From a stable like that it has to be good and, if you are fortunate enough to have played it in the arcades, or even more fortunate to have played it in the pub like me, then you will know that it certainly is the

business. You play a knight in shining armour who has to rescue a fairy maiden from the clutches of an ugly winged demon.

Ok, Ok, so the plot is not that original - but the game is great fun. A

Bomb Jack Ghosts and Goblins



shoot 'em up style adventure — where you pick up the items you need as you

The coin-op Ghosts and Goblins was so vast that not many gamers were rich enough to master it. This is of course no problem for the home version — where toughness is more a virtue than a handicap

We will carry a full review of Bomb Jack in the next issue and Ghosts and Goblins shortly after. Watch this space.

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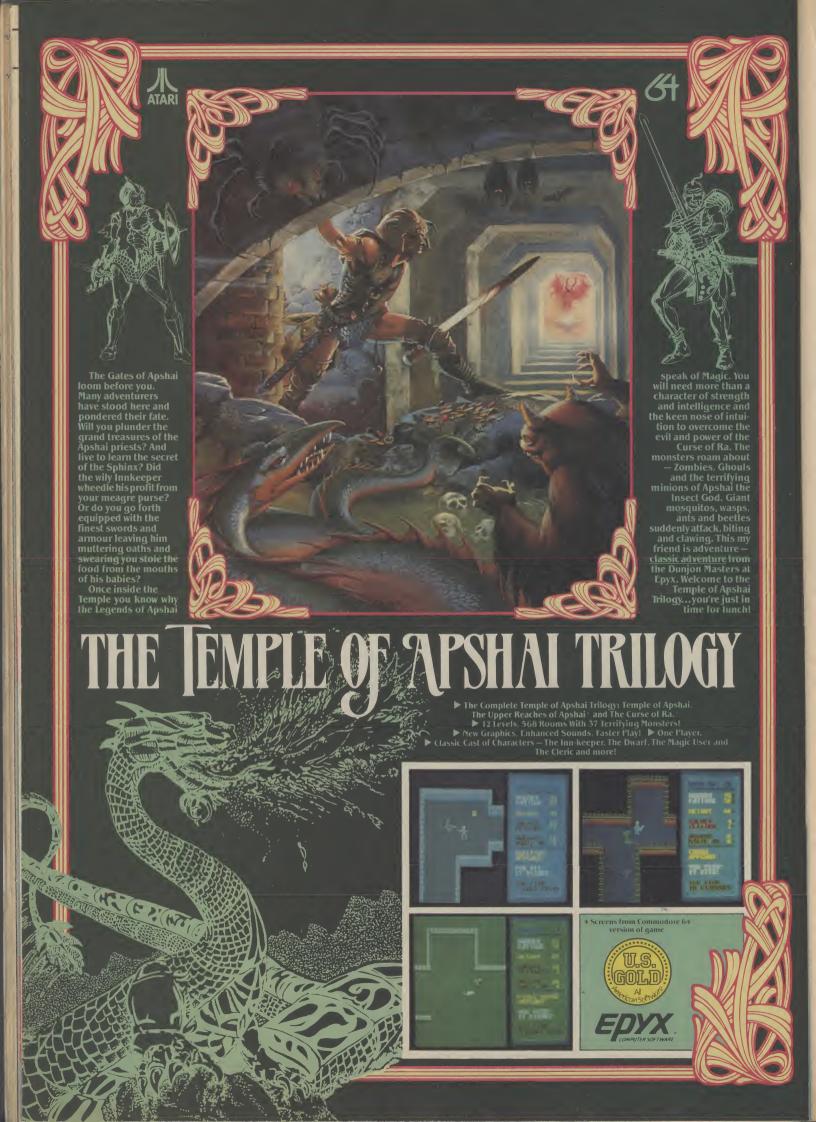
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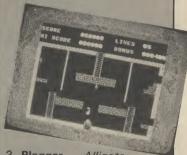
To help make life a little easier for you now we've presented you with such a large choice of 16 and Plus/4 software, we asked Ken McMahon, ace G-Force member, to choose his top five games on the 16. He disappeared for a few days to replay his collection and finally came back with this selection.

1. Berks III - CRL.

The best of the trilogy. An original and addictive arcade style game, something the 16 is well suited to.

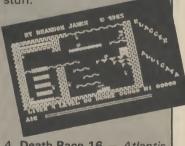
2. Dark Tower — Melbourne House.

Hectic platform action across 27 screens. Ambitious and impressive.



3. Blagger — Alligata.

Another slice of platform mania. You play Roger the Dodger a master burglar hunting for keys to a safe. Hectic stuff.



4. **Death Race 16** — Atlantis Still the best racing game for the 16 and a good one too.

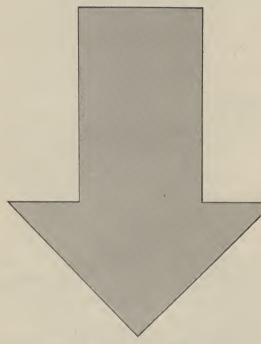


5. Timeslip — English Software.
Original battle against the

Original battle against the clock set in a *Scramble* type scenario. Hellish fun.

These are Ken's current five, but I can't see them staying that way with the amount of new and dramatically improved software we're promised. Elite's Commando is just one example.

Arrow for the C16 and Plus/4



You may not like snakes but you'll like this game. Guide the snake (using the cursor keys) so that it bumps into the numbered boxes that appear and disappear. You score points according to the number on the box. But the more you score, the longer the snake gets and you lose your life if it bumps into itself.

90 COLOR 0,8,7:COLOR 4,3,4 100 PRINT"[CLR, BLK, CD, RVS]ARROW 110 PRINT"[CD] INSTRUCTIONS (Y OR N)?" 112 GETZ\$: IFZ\$="Y"THEN115 113 IFZ\$="N"THEN190 114 GOTO112 115 PRINT"[CD]OKAY, THEN " 120 PRINT"[CD]GUIDE THE MOVING 'SNAKE' WITH THE CU RSORMOVEMENT KEYS. 140 PRINT"[CD]DON'T HIT THE BOUNDARY (OR YOURSELF) 150 PRINT"..TRY TO HIT THE BOXES FOR POINTS." 160 PRINT"[CD]YOU HAVE 60 SECONDS OF PLAY. GOOD LU CK!" 170 PRINT"[CD, RVS]HIT ANY KEY TO START" 180 GETZ\$: IFZ\$=""GOTO180 190 DIMP(255),D(3),V(8),H(8),T(8),R(8):K=.1 200 D(0)=22:D(1)=60:D(2)=62:D(3)=30 210 T9=3072:T6=3599:C1=2048 220 REMSET SCREEN UP 230 PRINT"[CLR, BLK] SCORE: O":PRINT"A" 240 FORJ=OTO81: IFPEEK(T9+J)<>1THENNEXTJ 250 L=J:FORJ=T9+LTOT9+2*L-1:POKEJ,81:POKEJ+23*L,81 :POKEJ-1024,2:POKEJ+23*L-1024,2 255 NEXTJ 260 FORJ=T9+2*LTOT9+24*LSTEPL:POKEJ,81:POKEJ+L-1,8 1:POKEJ-1024,2:POKEJ+L-1-1024,2 265 NEXTJ 270 V=5:H=5:V1=0:H1=1:P2=10:D1=2 280 TI\$="000000" 290 PRINT"[HDME]";RIGHT\$(TI\$,2):IFTI>T6G0T0620 300 GETZ\$: IFZ\$=""GOTO330 303 Z=ASC(Z\$): IFZ<>17ANDZ<>157ANDZ<>29ANDZ<>145THE N330 305 IFZ=17THENZ=0 306 IFZ=157THENZ=1 308 IFZ=29THENZ=2 310 IFZ=145THENZ=3 320 D1=Z:D=Z-1.5:V1=INT(ABS(D))*SGN(D):H1=SGN(D)-V 330 V=V-V1:H=H+H1:P=T9+V*L+H 350 P9=PEEK (P): 360 R6=R7:R7=R7+1:IFR7>P2THENR7=0 370 P1=P(R7):P(R7)=P:IFP1<>OTHENPOKEP1,32:POKEP1-1 024,7 380 POKEP, D(D1):P1=P(R6):IFP1<>OTHENPOKEP1,81:POKE P1-1024,6 390 IFP9<>32G0T0540 400 IFRND(1)>KG0T0290 410 V%=RND(1)*L/10:P9=86+V%:V9=V(V%):IFV9>0G0T0591 470 V2=INT(RND(1)*20)+3:H2=INT(RND(1)*(L-4))+2



Arrow was taken from Using the Commodore 16, a new book by Peter Gerrard from Duckworth. The book costs £9.95 but we've got fifteen copies to give away to the winners of this simple competition. Simply answer the three questions below:

480 FORV3=V2-1TOV2+1:P3=V3*L+T9:FORH3=H2-1TOH2+1:I

What was the original price of the 16 Starter Pack? a) £139.99; b) £219.99; c) £12.99

FPEEK (P3+H3) <>32G0T0470

How many colours will the 16 display?

a) 16; b) 121; c) 64 What is the 16's microprocessor called?

a) 1902; b) TED; c) 7501

Answers on a postcard to: C-16 Book Competition, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

To all C16/Plus 4 Owners

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Apollo Rescue Mission is a two part game, challenging and full of action. Your mission is to retrieve and reassemble sections of the ill fated Apollo 16 scattered over the lunar surface. Assembly of rocket must be done in the correct order to enable you to complete your task and blast off to a new universe. Beware of those dangerous aliens, that have to be eliminated with your laser. The second part of the mission is to retrieve Satellites floating in space with the use of a special arm, to be returned to earth for servicing.



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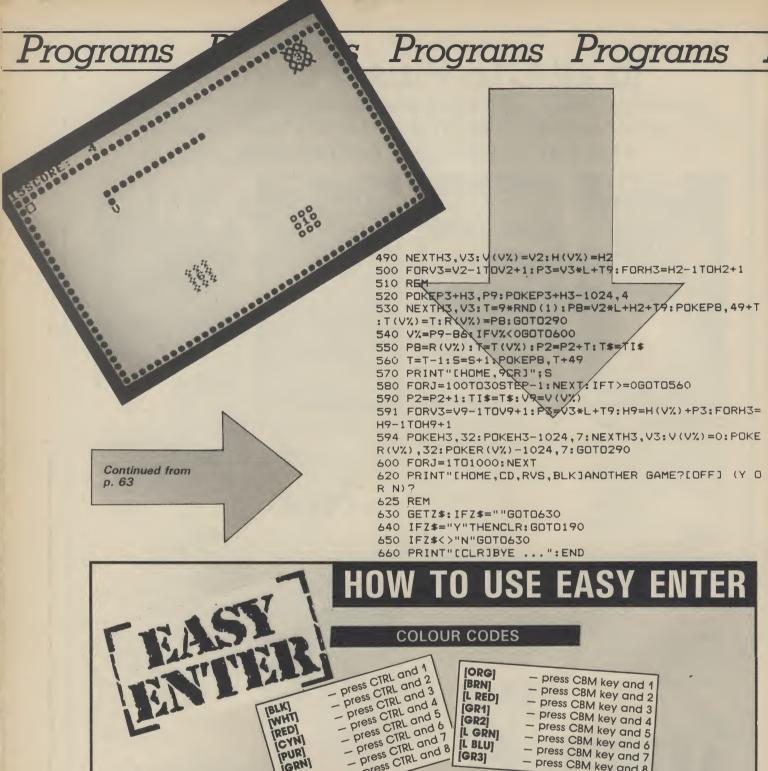
FORTHCOMING RELEASES:

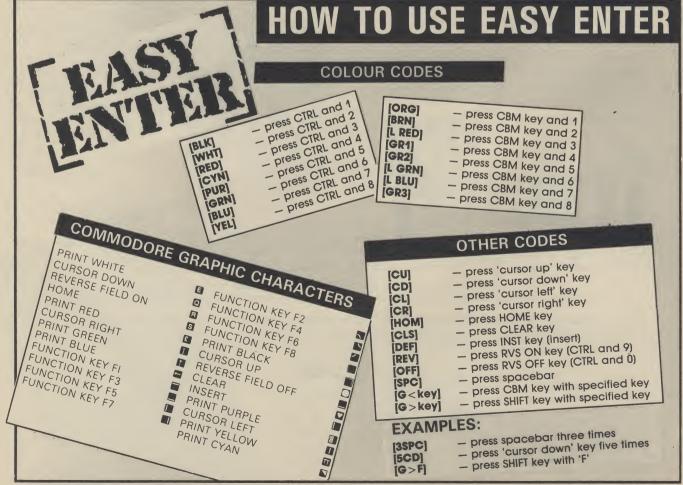
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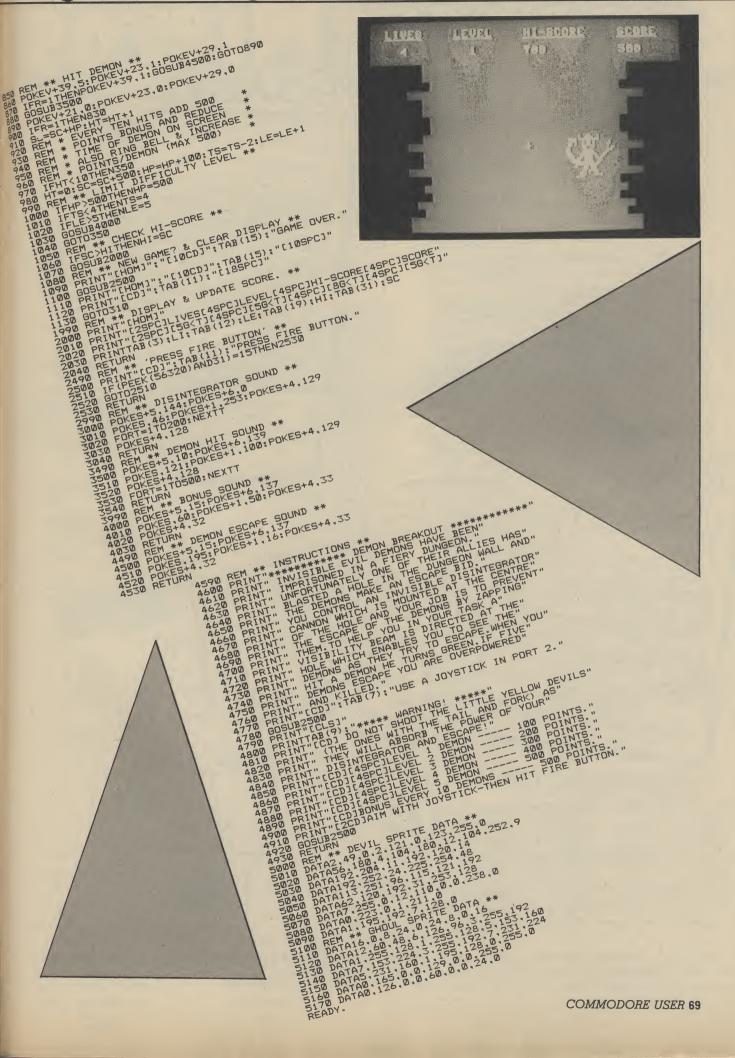
```
IF (PEEK (5652)
NEXTI
GOTO800
D1=D
GOSUB3000
REM * MOVE MISSILE & CHECK FOR HIT *
FORI=1TO9
POKE1604+D1,81:POKE55876+D1,5
POKE1604+D1,32
IFPEEK (53279) AND1=1THEN860
D1=D1+D:NEXTI
REM ** MISS DEMON **
          DI=DI+D:NEXTI
REM ** MISS DEMON **
POKEV+21,0
IFR=1THEN350
GOSUB4500
LI=LI-1:IFLI=0THEN1060
GOTO350
  790
800
810
820
830
840
```

by Bob Metcalf

Forget the title, this isn't one of those bouncing ball, hole in wall games. Much more original than that — it's all about ghostbusting.

Full instructions appear on screen but here's a taster: you've got to zap the devils and ghouls before they can get out of the dungeon. Careful though, you lose a life if you hit the yellow demon with the pitchfork. Sound and good use of sprites make this a neat little piece of programming.

Pr Programs Programs Programs Pr



Y SPECIA

THE NEW GENERATION OF BACKUP METHODS HAS ARRIVED

"Freeze Frame" is the product that '64 owners have been waiting for. At the touch of a switch "Freeze Frame" will take control of your computer and freeze the program in memory, allowing you to **SAVE it to tape or disc.** The uses are endless, but typical applications are

TAPE TO DISC: Use "Freeze Frame" to freeze a memory resident program and transfer it to disc regardless of the type of loading technique used. (Disc save incorporates a fast loading system.) loading system.)

DISC TO TAPE: Memory resident disc programs can be backed up onto tape. (Saved at turbo

speed.)
DISC: It is possible to make a self contained back up of disc based programs that will both load at high speed and allow the rest of the disc to be used as normal CUSTOMISE PROGRAM! The process can normally be seed with just one tape deck. ram, this means you can SAVE a program at a critical stage and restart at that point in the with these active.

futurell If you like putting "POKES" into programs for extra lives etc. you can save a version with these active.

With these active.

In fact "Freeze Frame" is the ultimate utility, it works on the program in memory and allows you to make a back up of that program onto tape or disc. The beauty being that the allows you to make a back up of other program onto tape or disc. The beauty being that the errors. The process is loading and in the case of disc Actups no longer has drive damaging DOS is required, just follow the prompts and the simple instructions for amazing results.

NOT dump for entire contents of memory, just the working program and parameters. Programs converted run Independently of the hardware. It is also compatible with the with software tested.

WARNING: Don't be misled by other adverts, if you want to transfer turbo load programs to disc, software only utilities are inadequate. They suffer from a variety of drawbacks including poor success rate, awkward to use, greedy on disc space and overpricing.

Disc-Disector

Now the fourth generation of the countries leading disc back up/utility package is available. Various improvements have been incorporated to re-establish "Disc Disector" as the wapon. Of particular importance are the following like weapon. Of particular importance are the following weapon. Of particular importance are the following must "Evesham Nirbbler" to the latest version of the infamous "Evesham Nirbbler" now boasting even more power and speed. Will now copy even the most highly now to boasting even more power and speed. Will now copy even the most highly now to boasting even more power and speed. Will now copy even the most highly now to boasting even fast protected discs in 3—4 minutes. Handles all the latest types of sisc protection completely now to boasting even fast protected discs in 3—4 minutes. In agrees of the programs of tware.

"Dual Driver Nibbler" allows the use of two drives to make even fast format. Unscratch, Disc Monitor, Disc Orderly, Fast File Copy, Index, Index, Tay or to the whole package is menu driven and has its own fast boot system built in for pour convenience. Pays for itself the first day you receive it.

Customers with earlier versions may return them along with a payment of £9.95 to receive V4.0

All programs are CBM 128 and 1570 compatible.

QUIET DRIVE STOPS

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**Computetions

This month, resident magician Phil Cornes has conjured up another selection of programming tricks and tips for the 64. e little gems you sent him last month.

Remember, we're offering a great Commodore who's maaical But he's already started sifting through anyone who's magical the little gems you sent him last month. offering Phil finds worthy of publication.

Trace your program

Very few programs written actually work first time (well, mine don't anyway) and one of the most difficult tasks is finding out exactly the most airricult tasks is tinaing our exactly what route the interpreter takes through the what route me merpreter takes inrough me that it program code. It occurred to me that it program code. If occurred to me that if would be very useful if Basic could be made would be very useful it basic could be made to list out the line number of each program line as the statements on each line were

The following program stores a machinecode routine at address 49152 that does just this, printing line numbers on the screen as the statements of a Basic program are executed.

executed.
To use the facility, RUN the program below to save the routine in memory and then load to save the routine in want to trace. The trace up the program you want to trace and off with the program you want to trace. facility itself can be toggled on and off with executed.

The way that this program works means the statement: SYS 49152. that it cannot be easily relocated, so it has to be used at address 49152 as given.

10 FOR C = 49152 TO 49200 20 READ B : POKE C.B : NEXT C 30 DATA 120,173,8,3,174,28,192 30 DATA 120, 173, 6, 3, 174, 20, 132 40 DATA 141, 28, 192, 142, 8, 3, 173 50 DATA 9, 3, 174, 29, 192, 141, 29 60 DATA 192,142,9,3,88,96,76 70 DATA 30,192,165,157,208,249,169 80 DATA 32,32,210,137,208,249,10 90 DATA 32,32,210,255,166,57,192 90 DATA 58,32,205,189,76,27,192

Program Trace Listing

Send your magic gems to: Computer Magic, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Control your cursor

One very frustrating omission in the Commodore 64 Basic concerns the lack of a modore designed to enable positioning of very large designed to enable positioning of the commodore of the commodo modore of basic concerns me tack of a keyword designed to enable positioning of the current without the current and the current without the curren the cursor anywhere on the screen. Without such a facility, the design and production of triendly screen layout is very difficult and friendly screen layout is very difficult and The following short machine-code pro-

gram is designed to overcome this problem gram is designed to overcome this problem by providing a SYS call which allows you to by providing a SYS call which allows you to by providing a SYS call which allows you to specify an X and Y soreen CO-ordinate The specify an X and A-24 respectively. The in the range A-20 and A-24 respectively. specify an X and Y screen co-ordinate pair in the range 0-39 and 0-24 respectively. The text cursor will then be moved to text cursor will then be specified co-ordinate ready for execution of specified co-ordinate ready. text cursor will then be moved to the specified co-ordinate ready for execution of the specified co-ordinate reduy for execution of the next PRINT statement. This is usually callthe next PRINT statement. This is usually called a PRINT AT command. The format of the ed a PRINI AI command. The formal of the 49152, and 7 are the required continuous of the follows: X,Y where X and Y are any valid numeric ordinates which can be any valid numeric ordinates. which can be any valid numeric valid numeric Although the routine starts at address

Aimougn me rouine sians ai aduress 49152 here, it is completely relocatable and can thus be placed anywhere in memory without alteration. Obviously, if you relocate the event of the event expressions. the program you will change the sys number to the routine's new start address me program you will change the 3Y number to the routine's new start address.

10 FOR C = 49152 TO 49184 20 READ B : POKE C.B : NEXT C 20 HEAU B: PURE C.B: NEXT C 30 DATA 32,253,174,32,158,183,224 40 DATA 40.144.5.162.14.76.55 50 DATA 164,138,72,32,253,174,32 60 DATA 158,183,224,25,176,239,104 70 DATA 168,24,76,240,255 Print AT(X,Y) listing

Get rid of READY

We all know that on the 64, the commands for listing a program to the printer are as

If you do this, you will find that the word follows: OPEN 4,4: CMD 4: LIST. READY appears after the end of the listing, even though it is not part of the program. The reason for this annoying extra output is because the CMD command re-routes the normal output produced by LIST and PRINT so that it goes to a file or, as in this case, a printer As DEADY is parently output to the so that it goes to a file or, as in this case, a printer. As READY is normally output to the printer. As READY is normally it is also sent to screen on LISTing a program, it is also sent to the printer after CDM 4. The READY message the printer after the printe is treated by the 64 as though it were an error message, produced to show that no errors

It seemed to me, therefore, that getting rid of the READY on LISTing to the printer might have occurred. all error achieved by suppressing

The following program listing stores a machine-code program which can toggle messages altogether. the error message output on and off. After running the program (which is relocatable), the statement: SYS 49152 will toggle the suppression of error messages on and off.

10 FOR C = 49152 TO 49178 20 READ B : POKE C,B : NEXT C 30 DATA 173,0,48,174,25,192,141 40 DATA 25,192,142,0,48,173,1 50 DATA 48,174,26,192,141,26,192 60 DATA 142,1,48,96,131,164

No errors listing.

Disk Head Cleaner

Here is a program specially for owners of the nere is a program specially for owners of the 1541 disk drive. After lots of use it becomes a good idea to buy a disk drive head cleaning disk to clean off any deposits of dust writing the consitive disk reading and writing aisk to clean oil any aeposits of aust of airl from the sensitive disk reading and writing

The instructions on these cleaning disks usually say that you should arrange to use usually say man you should alrange to use the cleaner in the drive with the heads load. ed (ie red light on) for about 30 seconds. The heads. only problem is that there are no standard only problem is that there are no standard ways of keeping the disk spinning for anything like this length of time.

The following program overcomes this length of the following program overcomes the following program over

The following program overcomes this prothe following program overcomes this pro-blem by sending a special sequence of commands to the disk drive to keep it busy

while the head cleaner does its job.

while the nead cleaner does its job.

To use the program, you should just enter it into the 64 then insert the cleaning disk and into the 64 then program. The disk drive should account the program the disk drive should be accounted the program. execute the program. The disk drive should execute the program, the disk drive should then start up. When the cleaner has been doing long long to the cleaner has been doing to the cleaner has been do men sian up. When the cleaner has been going long enough, press and hold the space bar until the drive stops.

10 OPEN 15,8,15 : OPEN 2,8,2," #" 10 UPEN 15,8,15 : UPEN 2,8,2, # 20 PRINT #15, "UA:":2:0:1:0
30 GET A\$: IF A\$ < > 7 "THEN 20

40 CLOSE 2 : CLOSE 15

Head cleaner listing

Append Files

On most computers it is a good idea, when you start programming seriously, to save a set of programs containing useful routines set of programs containing useful routines.
The routines can then be appended esta The routines can then be appended onto the end of any program you are writing that requires the use of them. Sadly, on the commendate At this cannot be done as no an analysis. modore 64 this cannot be done as no append facility has been provided in the Basic

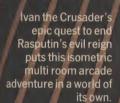
If you run the following program it will store a machine-code routine in memory, starting at address 49152. The routine provides the ar adaress 49702. The routine provides the facility to append a Basic program from tensor distributes the and of any Basic program tensor of distributes the angle of any Basic program tensor distributes the angle of any Basic program tensor of the provides the angle of any Basic program tensor of the provides the angle of the provides the provides the angle of the provides the angle of the provides the angle of the provides the pr tape or disk onto the end of any Basic program already in memory. The routine is completely relocatable so it can be moved if

necessary without changing the code. Before using the routine you should make sure that the line numbers in the two programs do not overlap or it might create problems as this program performs an append

To use the routine, you just type: SYS 49152, "FILENAME" for tape use, or: sys 49152, function and not a merge. "FILENAME" for tape use, or: 313 49132,
"FILENAME", 8 for use on a disk file where FILENAME is the name of the files to append.

FOR C = 49152 TO 49230 READ B : POKE C,B : NEXT C DATA 32,121,0,32,253,174,169 DATA 0.133,10,32,212,225,165 DATA 43.72,165,44,72,56,165 20 DATA 45,233,2,133,43,165,46 30 DATA 233,0,133,44,169,0,133 DATA 185,166,43,164,44,32,213 40 DATA 255,176,14,134,45,132,46 100 DATA 32,51,165,104,133,44,104 110 DATA 133,43,96,170,201,4,208 120 DATA 5,164,186,136,240,206,104 130 DATA 133,44,104,133,43,24 140 DATA 108,0,3 File Append Listing

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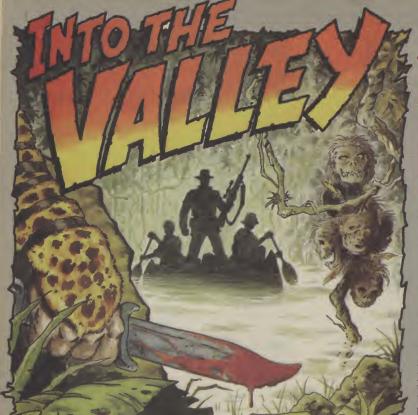
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Lord of the Rings Melbourne House Price: £15.95

heir to a legend.

copy of Tolkien's 529-page tures that make up the trio. novel, The Fellowship of the Ring It was The Hobbit, aided - the first in the trilogy that abetted to some extent by Twin forms the basis of this game) you Kingdom Valley, that broke the feel a little like Indiana Jones mould of text adventures when it peering into the Lost Ark of the first colourfully breathed life in-

Covenant. The first nice surprise is that you're getting not one but actually three self-contained adventures for your £.15.95.

The first is a beginner's game a cut-down version of one of the full adventures that he Hobbit still probably holds nevertheless incorporates all the the record for being the world's main locations, objects and biggest-selling adventure ever. characters. The big plus is that So reviewing Lord of the Rings calling for HELP whenever a isn't so much a question of problem is encountered proassessing a sequel as meeting the duces a useful hint. Otherwise, it is much the same in looks and Prising open the weighty play characteristics as the two package (it includes a paperback full-blooded, HELPless adven-

It was The Hobbit, aided and



Graphics are kept simple but at least they are always quickly drawn and colourful.

Adventure Adventu

At last, Lord of the Rings, the long-awaited sequel to The Hobbit, has landed on JR's doorstep. He's been wandering, dazed through Middle Earth ever since. Only the appearance of Doomdark's Revenge has managed to break the spell.

in 1983, and so it is natural to make The Lord of the Rings' visual appeal the first point of comparison with its predecessor.

The running screen display comprises three overlapping rectangles with a description and occasional graphic representation of one's current location appearing in the foreground. The borders of the subordinate rectangles hold the images of which move from the hindmost border to the foremost, and then back again, according to their proximity to the character you

to millions of screen pixels back blinking a cursor. But it's more fun still to start lacing your sentences with prepositions such as in ATTACK THE GUARD WITH THE SWORD AND TAKE THE SWORD FROM THE TABLE. A single entry could be composed of several such sentences, punctuated with commas and full stops as with ordinary English, up to a maximum of 128 characters long.

Another technique pioneered your travelling companions, in The Hobbit and happily contnued in TLR is the ability to converse more or less naturally with your travelling companions and other characters, and even to



A vignette of each of the characters you assume remains on view at the top of the screen while portraits of your travelling companions move in and out of the main illustrations.

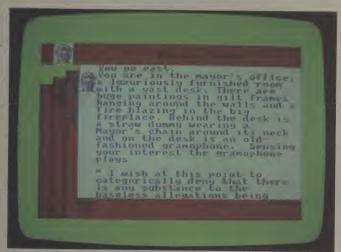
have assumed.

First impressions are that TLR is very much more textual than The Hobbit, sometimes using up two scrolling screenfuls of text to describe a single location. The graphics are satisfactory but they do not mark any significant advance over those presented in The Hobbit.

Still, faintly disappointing graphics should not detract from TLR's excellence in so many other respects. Philip Mitchell's renowned Inglish parser seems to have been refined still further to permit even more effortless exploration of Middle Earth using commands as simple or as complex as one likes. Its 800-word vocabulary can cope with conventional commands such as EXAMINE THE RING

instruct them to take certain actions. For example, one can SAY TO MERRY "GIVE THE ORC THE EMERALD" - or in a shorthand version of the same kind of command, SAM "GIVE MAP TO FRODO". Intelligent and apt use of the SAY command or its derivatives is absolutely crucial to your successful completion of this adventure, since many situations rely on a form of esprit de hobbits rather than individual action by the character you choose to play. Just don't expect others always to obey your edicts - the inhabitants of Middle Earth have minds and allegiances of their

A quite surrealistic variation on this theme is that, having once chosen whether to assume or CLIMB THE TREE without the persona of FRODO,



Possibly the world's most verbose graphic adventure. TLR frequently takes up a couple of screenfuls of text.

another character with the simple command BECOME to explore the adventure in a single rôle before calling this wherever you can find it, and facility into use - though you don't forget to REST now and could find it invaluable if, for ex- then. Other key commands ample, you, as FRODO, feel compelled to sacrifice one of your compatriots in attempting a You can also check your SCORE rather dangerous action! More practically, one can by this (which is quite different from the means split up the original party and have individual members of the quartet separately travelling ticular game to tape before either around different parts of the attempting a risky action or Shire, for example, and testing powering down for the night. the challenges and conditions to be found there.

you must map your travels and, since TLR permits movements to eight points of the compass, vou'll find it best to plot your progress on a grid of hexagonals. It gets even more interesting when you call up the option to track a character, such as FOLLOW GREEN KNIGHT without knowing in which direction he is going. You are also

Riding out to a new megaventure - the hobbithating Black Riders.



MERRY, SAM or PIPPIN at combat, and here it is necessary the beginning of each game, one to specify both the weapon and can at any time switch to being your victim, as in KILL WARG WITH AXE.

Wounds slow one's progress, MERRY. You'd be well advised as will weariness and lack of food. So take sustenance always worth trying include LOOK, EXAMINE and WAIT. at any point, PAUSE the game command WAIT), check your INVENTORY, and SAVE a par-

When you have finally mastered your first quest, you anyway, as they were enjoying quence, and then move in any of As in all microadventuring, may perhaps choose to switch another success with the spec- eight directions. tapes and encounter the Black Riders, the orcs of Moria, the dreaded realm of Angmar and of course the evil Sauron all over that title, though frequently pro- Shareth the Heartstealer you in gain in the second, selfcontained full adventure, never to sizzle the 64's circuitry. Prince of Midnight have the possibly taking time to dip into The Fellowship of The Ring meantime to give you some more clues to your best strategy.

Overall, The Lord of The Rings bound to become involved in does more than serve as a worthy sequel to The Hobbit, for it has a character and depth all of its

Attention to detail, brilliant parser logic, character interaction and the sheer potential for hours and hours of absorbing entertainment, make The Lord of The Rings a totally irresistible addition to the ranks of all-time micro-adventure classics.

Graphics **** **** **Literary Merit** Intelligence **** **Toughness** *** Value **** Doomdark's Revenge GrA **Beyond** Price: £9.95

No one has ever come close — C64 version finally appeared. By take a 360° view by tapping the then, Beyond weren't too fussed keys numbered 1 to 8 in se-

Telecom's takeover of Beyond (and perhaps the generally dismal reception given to Superman) has prompted a rethink with the result that Doomdark's Revenge for the 64 has at last arrived - and it's looking very, very good.

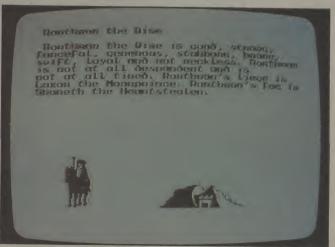
If you've not played Lords of and perhaps never will - to Midnight, it's necessary to exemulating Mike Singleton's plain that it differs from convengenius with graphics manipula- tional adventures in that any of tion in his superb strategy-cum- the available actions can be taken adventure game The Lords of by just a single keypress, though Midnight, which was a huge hit the response always takes the on the Spectrum but - perhaps form of text set against one of the because of the delay in its release splendid landscapes of Icemark - failed to make anything like that number literally thousands. the same impression when the Indeed, one can at any location



Rorthorn the Wise encounters a fearsome foursome in the mountains.

trum version of the sequel, In this further confrontation mised, seemed itself doomed your role as Luxor, the Moon-

Doomdark's Revenge — and a with the evil witchking Doom-Commodore implementation of dark and the unassailable But now it seems that British power to directly control three



Identity crisis? The touch of a key will bring you the lowdown on whether or not your current personal is non grata.



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COMMODORE 64



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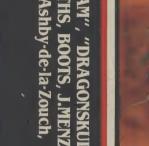




COMMODORE 64



£9.95 inc VAT. Available from W.H.SMITHS, BOOTS, J.MENZIES, WOOLWORTHS and all good software retail outlets. Also available from ULTIMATE PLAY THE GAME, The Green, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE6 5JU (P&P are included) Tel: 0530 411485 "CYBERUN", "GUNFRIGHT", "PENTAGRAM", "DRAGONSKULLE", "OUTLAWS", "BLACKWYCHE", "ENTOMBED" recommended retail price





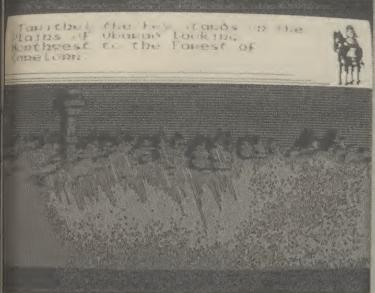








Adventure Adventure Adventure



Night must fall, and the colours of dusk add an eerie beauty to Singleton's sandscapes.

other characters who are symand are accessed simply by pressing one of the function keys. When one of those alternatives is changes to that character's view-Icemark.

The player may look or move in any of eight directions, and choose one of several courses of action. He is also able to check progress in several ways. He may for instance ask for more detailed information about his present location, seek intelligence about any battle or skirmish in which he has been involved, confirm the position of his own army and of any others in the same location, and learn more about the character of the person under his control (and beware - this can change during the course of a game!).

In Doomdark's Revenge, as in its predecessor, the sophistication of the combat interludes belies Mike Singleton's interest in, and mastery of, wargaming for although the options are much simpler than in a conventional simulation (because, after all, combat is only one of the game's many features), one's strategy can really be quite subtle. Here, combat is by no means a question of swiping at the nearest adversary and hoping that your strength holds up for a few more telling blows. Instead you are concerned with manipulating a whole army, and then deciding whether to attack or simply approach another army, not knowing whether it is comprised of allies or adversaries.

There are more than just pathetic to your cause. They are wandering armies, and special Morkin, Tarithel and Rorthron characters, depicted in Mike Singleton's unique graphic style. In the Kingdom of Icemark you will also discover strange watchselected, the screen immediately towers, fortresses, palaces, temples, torchlit tunnels and point, wherever he may be in refreshing fountains - not to mention the cold mists that will spoil your view but at least entrap Shareth's iceguard.

The wonder of it is that a 64

mously. The final part of equals. Luxor's epic quest, Eye of the Moon, is due out soon. One hopes that it will not be another year before a 64 implementation of that title too is made available, to complete a trilogy of strategy

version has been held back so adventures that, in terms of their long. But it is here to enjoy now, stunning visual appeal, originaliand enjoy it you will - enor- ty and playability, have no

> **Graphics** **** **Literary Merit** **** Intelligence **Toughness** ****

High in the saddle in the kingdom of a million mountains, but there are seven more view to check before Luxor moves on.



CHARTS

- 1 (1) The Worm in Paradise C64/128 (Level 9, GrA, £7.95)
- 2 (3) Terrormolinos C64/128 (Melbourne House, GrA, £9.95 cass.)
- 3 (7) Seas of Blood C64/128 (Adventure International, GrA, £9.95)
- 4 (2) The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole C64/128 (Mosaic, GrA, £7.95)
- 5 (8) Quest for the Holy Grail C64/128 (Mastertronic, GrA, £1.99)
- NEW 6 (1) The Odyssey — C64/128 (Duckworth, TA, £9.95)
 - 7 (5) The Never Ending Story C64/128 (Ocean Software, GrA, £9.95)
 - 8 (6) Robin of Sherwood C64/128 (Adventure International, GrA, £7.95)
- NEW 9 (-) **Doomdark's Revenge** — C64/128 (Beyond Software, GrA, £9.95)
- NEW 10 (-) Masquerade — C64/128 (All American Adventures, GrA, £14.95 disk only)

Level 9 deservedly hangs onto the top spot in this month's chart, which also tracks the success of other hot New Year releases.

The fabulously entertaining Lord of The Rings from Melbourne House, which shot to the No. 3 spot in last month's chart on the basis of preorders alone, now shifts up another place to displace the spotty but endearing Adrian Mole, and another new entry from last month, Adventure International's variation on a theme that combines a full-feature graphic adventure with real-time combat interludes, sails into an even higher place in the ratings.

Mastertronic's bargain basement title marks that label's first-ever appearance in the Valley's chart, and Duckworth's new double-tape textbuster also makes its debut. The splendid 64 implementation of Doomdark's Revenge also appears on the landscape, and All American Adventures make a well-merited breakthrough with their marvellously illustrated, if pricey, teaser featuring a substandard Sam Spade.

■ ADVENTURE NEWS ■ ADVENTURE NEWS ■ ADVENTURE NEWS

 Adventure International, who Brown says he's now thinking of titles would be available from late for Scott Adams titles, have reached an agreement with US Gold to market their titles in the UK. In the past year, no Scott Adams product has materialised this side

started life as a marketing function using Al's expertise to produce adventure spin-offs from such arcade hits as Beachhead and Raid Over Moscow.

 Softsel appear to have got off to of the Atlantic. However, following a bad start as the new British his acquisition of rights to Brian distributors of Infocom product. Howarth adventures, Mike Wood- Even review copies of new or recent roffe has worked with Howarth to titles such as Seastalker and produce some outstanding home- Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy grown titles, including Gremlins were still unavailable in time for this (which outsold any Scott Adams month's column — nearly two title in the UK) and Robin of months after Softsel's announce-Sherwood. US Gold chief Geoff ment that all five Infocom Classic

November.

- Firebird haven't fixed a release date yet, but it's now certain that they'll be producing a 64 version of Runesoft, a role-playing adventure originally developed by the defunct Games (Tower of Despair) Workshop.
- Bug-Byte, newly-arrived under the software group that owns Quicksilva and Mindgames, have announced a C16 version of Trevor Hall's classic 1983 title Twin Kingdom Valley.

Classic nnetition

The Kingdom of Icemark provides the setting for two of the most absorbing, intelligent and intricate strategy adventures ever devised — and now you have a chance to explore its secrets, its hazards and its rewards for just the cost of a postage stamp thanks to the generosity of Beyond Software, who have stumped

up 10 copies each of Lords of Midnight and the new Doomdark's Revenge as the prizes in this month's competition.

For your chance to win one of our free games, answer the simple question below and send off the cut out coupon without delay.

The first ever adventure

game was called Colossal Caves and ran on a mainframe computer. It was programmed by (A) John Ransley (B) Pete Austin or, (C) Crowther and Woods.

Add your name and address and the titles of your three favourite current adventures - and tick the box to indicate whether you'd like The Lords of Midnight or Doomdark's Revenge (both on tape) if you win.

	The	correct an	swer is	
	Α	В	С	(Please circle your choice)
1	My three favour	ite advent	ures cu	rrently are:

Your Name	•••••			
Address	•••••			***************************************
	•••••			
I'd like Lords Mail th	of Midnight	Doomo	lark's R	evenge (tick one)
	Classics Comp	etition, Co	ommodo	re User,



Here's a list of lucky winners from January's Nerverending Story Competition. Prizes are already finding their way into the postbag:

C. Combes of Dagenham, Lee Wood of Worcester, C. Munuachen of Luton, Laurence Rugg of London, D. Nugent of Romford, John Ahmed of Hull, Matthew Hide of Cleethorpes, John Dewar of Coventry, Alex Joss of Leigh-on-Sea and A. King of Rugby.

STICK GRIP STICK

by Daniel Gilbert SCIOII VOUI Activision's

You wouldn't try repairing a car if you weren't a mechanic, would you? So why try writing games when you can't program? Activision reckons it's got that solved with its new GameMaker program. We thought we'd check it out.

Activision's claims for its new GameMaker package are pretty inflated: it will let you create "incredible computer games" without having to learn complex languages or spend months programming your ideas. That's what the blurb says anyway. You've got to be cautious simply because similar packages in the past have always been such a let down.

But the man behind Gamemaker is none other than Garry Kitchen who's programming track record includes the Space Shuttle simulator and the Designer's Pencil that sounds a bit more encouraging.

The package comes either as a cassette or disk which has Gamemaker on one side and a set of sprites, tunes, backgrounds and sound effects on the other. A blank tape or disk is supplied for you to put created programs on, with the option of entering a games designing competition using the Gamemaker.

It has a comprehensive (if not a little daunting) instruction manual which clearly explains all the aspects of the program and gives examples to emphasise points. There is also a vary useful summary sheet of all the main instructions and directions used throughout the package, as well as a chart/stave for the music editor.

The main program consists of an icondriven programming utility and a menu system to access other parts of the package. The language is a very fast and time-saving one, with such commands as 'SPRITE DIR =' which sets a sprite moving in a direction at a certain speed (also defined) and 'SONG IS x' which plays a named song — created on the music editor.

A well structured labelling system aids programming, too. Unfortunately, as all the inputs are icon-driven, program writing is often slowed down.

Each variable, for instance, requires you to scroll through all the letters A-Z. This can become extremely annoying when you are designing a long and complex game, as

a page of instructions may take more than ten minutes, whereas input by keyboard would take a fifth of this time. One assumes that this is because a syntaxchecker would have occupied too much memory.

Music and Sound

From the menu in the main program you can reach the music, sound, sprite or background (graphics) editors. The first of these, music, gives you a choice of thirteen instruments to play in three channels over three staves (a large no. of octaves). This has all the makings of a good package by itself - and there's a 'tie' facility to help the notes flow and a tempo setting so the pace of the tune can be varied, in addition to the wide ranging sound facilities.

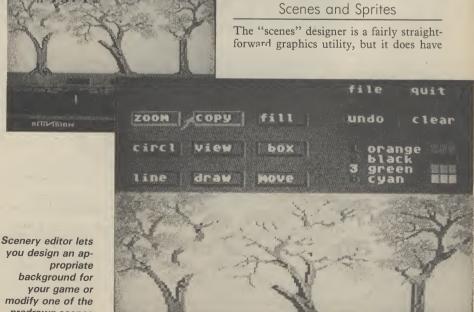
As mentioned, a number of pre-made tunes are also supplied, although what you could do with tunes like the Blue Danube and the Star Spangled Banner defeats me.

but you can simply play around with these for a while, changing speed and instruments, to get the feel of it. A very large, complicated tune can be written and saved using the Music Editor, making this one of the best parts of the whole package.

The sound editor is an interesting design, taking the form of a large sound synthesizer with 'knobs' which can be turned to alter envelopes, pitch, etc. and a graphic equalizer for the various filters, volume and speed.

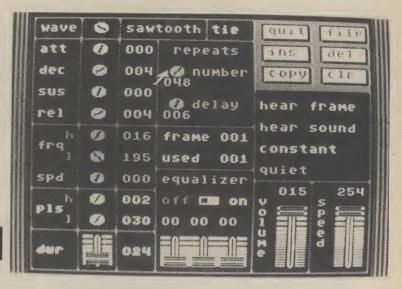
This last feature refers to the speed at which the 'frames' of sound are played back (each sound effect is composed of several sounds or 'frames' played back consecutively).

The design of each sound is pretty complex, involving nearly all the devices on screen, so you have to experiment quite a bit to get the hang of creating effective ones. This section is also professional in approach and enables some fairly advanced sounds to be created.



predrawn scenes.

GameMaker reviewed



impressively fast execution. A palette of four colours is used to draw with and a features list enables circles, boxes, filled circles, filled boxes and lines to be drawn.

Screen areas can be copied or erased and a zoom function enables detailed work to be tackled in close-up. No quirks, no frills, no problems with this section.

Sadly the sprite designer crashed upon loading in the review copy probably because the review disk I used was an American import. But if it matches the other parts of the design package it will be quite competent. The instructions for it include multiple sprite animation, multi-

name-pitfal free- 0010 Menu file 0000 add 10 scorei scoreral CIL De Column Ds run ins del find 301010 COPY

write music.

Lots of knobs to twiddle on the sound editor screen.



GameMaker features its own programming language.

colour and normal sprite design. A mass of pre-drawn sprites are supplied on disk or tape.

Conclusions

So, the body of a good package is all there. Unfortunately, there are a few 'little' things that have been omitted which I feel a truly excellent games designer would have. For instance, screen scrolling in games is not catered for, nor is speech design nor absolutely stunning sound effects. These features are what separate good games from classic games.

Another aggravating point is the limit of eight sprites on the screen at once - ok, so they are animated but that doesn't make up for the lack of numbers.

Two more moans: firstly, the memory available for programs is only large until you add music to it. The William Tell Overture, for instance, takes up a third of your total programming area. Secondly, you can forget multi-screened games: you only get two to play with.

The most I can imagine you could create with GameMaker is a souped-down Exploding Fist or Fight Night — they use only a few sprites on screen, only a few backgrounds, and only one tune. You could make a veritable Pacman but not Space Invaders (too many sprites), while Rambo represents everything this package cannot do.

Simply place notes The restrictions are perhaps best illustrated if I say that at one point I had a snapping crocodile head, two merry-goround rabbits, Santa Claus, two Zeppelins, an aircraft carrier and a toy dog flying around space accompanied by For He's A Jolly Good Fellow and I felt I was pushing the package to its limits.

> I feel this is an improvement on similar programs like Games Creator, but it's not quite there yet. You could definitely make some quite good original games with the Game-Maker but I think you would know that they'd been made with this and not actually programmed.

- GameMaker Activision, Harley House, 18 Marylebone Road. London NW1 01-935 1428
- Price: £9.99/cass. £14.99/disk



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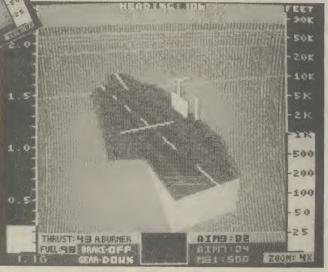
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The Jet Set

More up to the minute news from America's most dedicated Amiga watcher. But Dan's found time to keep you up to date on the newest software for the Commodore 64.

Dan Gutman reports.



Jet for the Commodore 64- Cockpit view of F-16 approaching control tower.

The biggest news in the Commodore 64/128 world has been the recent release of SubLOGIC's Jet — you may or may not know that the biggest selling computer game in history (in the US) is SubLOGIC's Flight Simulator II. The program takes you on an aerial tour of the entire United States, stopping at 80 airports along the way. You can even fly your plane past the Sears Tower in Chicago, Seattle's Space Needle, or the Statue of Liberty in New York (Once I tried to fly between the two towers of The World Trade Centre and crashed).

Above:

Cockpit view of

F-18 on carrier-

landing approach.

Below: Control tower

view of F-18 in a dive.

So Jet is the long awaited sequel to Flight Simulator II. But this time, instead of flying a Piper 181 Cherokee Archer, you're piloting an F-16 Fighting Falcon. And you can do more than cruise around. The plane is much faster and more manoeuverable, and it's equipped with air-to-air missiles, AGM missiles, and smart bombs.

Jet is a big hit over here, and if you want to get a Commodore 64/128 copy for youself, contact SubLOGIC at 713 Edgebrook Dr., Champaign IL 61820 (include \$42).

Rumour has it, by the way, that the next flight simulator from SubLOGIC will run over phone lines — a guy in New York and a guy in Los Angeles will be able to fly around and actually *see* each other's planes on their screens. Wow!

Now showing on Amiga

As you probably know, Amiga is capable of stereo sound. Predictably, the first stereo speakers have just been released for the machine. They're called "Room-Mate" and they sell for \$229. To get a set, contact: Bose Corporation, The Mountain, Framingham MA 01701 U.S.A.

Amiga software is starting to pour into the marketplace over here. Electronic Arts has just released eight new titles: Skyfox, Seven Cities of Gold, Archon, Arcticfox, Financial Cookbook, Software Golden Oldies, Dr. J. and Larry Bird Go One On One, and Deluxe Paint.

Most of these are translations of existing Apple and Commodore 64 programs, but *Deluxe Paint* is new and pretty spectacular. It's a graphics program similar to Apple's MacPaint, but you can use 32 colours for your

background and 32 more for your foreground. You can customize any colour by changing the amount of red, green or blue. The computer lets you magnify, zoom, smear, blend, shade and all kinds of other manipulations of the image.

Other new Amiga programs due to arrive any day: Marble Madness (Electronic Arts), The Print Shop (Broderbund), Sargon III (Hayden), and Deja Vu, The Halley Project (Mindscape). The software base is still very small, but new packages are coming out every day. And on this side of the Atlantic, the catch phrase is, "Software drives hardware". No computer has ever sold very well until a decent library of software has been available for it.

Of course, there's a "Catch-22" to that — why should a software company waste its time and resources developing programs for a computer until a lot of people have bought it? Oh well, with that logic, no computer would *ever* be successful. Eventually a good computer will sell on its own merit?

No show at CES

Meanwhile, Commodore have been guilty of party pooping, prefering to stay away from the prestigious winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. Instead, they held a press conference at a nearby hotel whilst, inside, Jack Tramiel's Atari announced an even bigger version of its increasingly popular ST series, the one megabyte 1040ST. Funnily enough (but not for Commodore) it will cost the same as the memory poorer Amiga.

Also inside, a number of British software houses were in evidence. Two with notably large amounts of floorspace were Mastertronic and Firebird.

Well, Commodorians, that's it from the States. You'll be interested to know that the much publicized "Computer Slump" over here has subsided somewhat. People have stopped saying that computers were a fad. People have stopped saying that computers are the greatest thing since the invention of the wheel. Now they're being a little more realistic — computers can be useful tools for some people, and others don't really need them.





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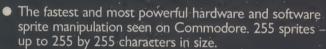
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HAPPYIIIHACKERIIII

Much is happening in the wonderful world of comms — notably cheap modems and lots of on-line software. But beware, there have been recent disputes over modems which don't wear the all-important green badge of approval from British Telecom (which, of course, forbids you to connect to the BT phone system). But lets get on with the news . . .

by Geof Wheelwright

■ Solely 64 Salutations — Here's the latest news from Micronet Towers, where Commodore User's revamped Happy Hacker column was greeted personally by Solely 64 bigwig Phil Godsell. He sent this personal missive . . .

'Hello Geof, read your Happy Hacker column in Commodore User, and couldn't resist dropping you a line. You mention all the wonderful software on Compunet (fair enough), but I hope you're going to mention such gems as Elite's *Commando* on the 'Net, which is number one in all commercial charts and which we had first day of release as telesoftware. By the way, look out for Tasword 64 on the 'Net.

All the Best,
Phil Godsell (Software)'
Consider it mentioned, Phil . . .

● Micronet Freebies — Commando, however, isn't the only 64 software available on the 'Net. There's quite a selection of FREE (gratis, no funds involved) games, utilities and other goodies which can be downloaded.

But take care that any savings you might make on the software itself are not increased by a bigger bill from BT. Some programs — such as the Rollerball Express arcade game — can take more than 30

minutes to download and save to tape (the problem is not particularly acute for disk drive users, who are already used to putting up with the snail-like pace of the 1541 disk)!

In recognition of this problem (which Solely 64 admits isn't limited to *Rollerball*), you can now get 'long-load' software on tape from Micronet.

For £1, tape users can get up to two Solely 64 programs on cassette in turbo load format. The 'Net says the change is to cover postage and packing, cassette cost plus a small amount to cover handling. It points out that the actual call cost to download software such as Sid's Jukebox and Rollerball Express to tape is in excess of 50p plus the cost of the tape!

The 'Net promises that in future, any telesoftware on Solely 64 that will be available on turbo cassette and will be clearly indicated in the SOLELY 64 Software Index on 80013321.

● Meanwhile At Compunet — Compunet is still having a ball with it's new Partyline and Editor Jane Firbank now informs us it's now more popular than the old 'on-line chat' ever was — with new people logging on every night.

The only problem with this electronic

party is trying find quiet places to go off and have a private chat — so Compunet is furiously working to get its 'private room' facility set-up, whereby a few people on the partyline can section themselves off and have a quiet on-line conversation.

These will be accessed via a *ROOM command, whereby you might invent and enter a room called 128 with a *ROOM 128 command — and you could go into that room to chat with friends about the 128

Editor Jane also tells us that there could be *LOCK command for really private conversations, but that's still in the planning stages.

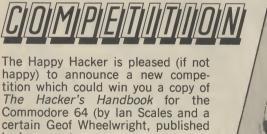
● Getting Your Number — Compunet is also working on alternatives to navigation by 'page numbers'. It soon hopes to implement alphanumeric gotos which would allow you to goto MUD just by typing the word MUD after hitting the GOTO command.

Most major sections such as NEWS, PARTY and JUNGLE would thus be quickly accessible without having to remember whole loads of numbers.

● On-Line Aid — The computer communications industry's contribution to the Band Aid fund-raising campaign is looking for any and all contributions from individuals and companies to aid African famine relief.

Money coming into Online Aid through this appeal will be channeled through Band Aid/Live Aid to provide immediate food aid and — in the longer term — go towards relief and development project. Anyone wishing to contribute or help this campaign can contact Claire Gooding on 01-624 7945 or Paul Walton on 01-515 2739.

That's all the hacking news that's fit to print this month — but I look forward to hearing your comments and ideas for this column. Remember, you can contact me on Prestel mailbox 013280101 or on Compunet via the ID CBMUSER. Happy Hacking!



I can vouch for at least one of the authors and promise that the book will be a good read. For your chance to win a copy, answer the questions below and send off to Commodore User, Happy Hacker Competition, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Entries must reach us no later than 20th March.

by Longman).



- What was the recent film in which a teenage hacker almost caused a third World War?
- 2 Which member of the Royal Family had their Telecom Gold account hacked last year. Was it (A) Princess Diana; (B) The Duke of Edinburgh or (C) Prince Harry?

3 What is the name of the interactive adventure game currently enjoying great popularity amongst modem owners?



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centre line ΔU hard justify
justify line ΔU unjustify line
justify para SWITCHES paging on/off AH insert on/off wordwrap on/off AF Justify on/off TEXT FILE COMMANDS

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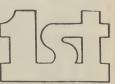
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GLUED TO THE BOX

A roundup of monitors for the 128 by Ken McMahon

Now that you've moved up to a 128 you won't be content just to plug it into the old telly. With its 80-column display and hi-res output, you can use it with a confusingly wide range of monitors. We explain and list all the options.

If you've splashed out enough hard earned to buy a 128, you'll probably want to get the most out of it. And the first thing you'll notice is that you won't get very much if you plug it into the telly at home.

The reason is simple: you won't be able to get 80-columns or a high resolution screen, and you won't be able to run the programs specially designed for the 128 (I'll explain why later). So the telly just won't do: let the family watch Eastenders on it. You've simply got to buy a monitor.

Buying anything for your computer is fraught with problems; there's always a simple and a hard way. The simplest way is to buy the excellent *Commodore 1901* colour monitor specially designed for the 128

It will work in 40-columns (64 mode) and by simply flicking a switch, you get the full 80 column RGBI output that the 128 can produce. At £299.99 it will also produce a hole in your pocket. If you've got that kind of money, you can stop here, the rest of you can carry on reading.

There's a wide variety of cheaper monitors you can buy, and the best way of choosing is to decide what you want to do Before we look at what particular monitors have to offer it's probably a good idea to examine the kind of output the C128 can produce and how it does it.

128 video sockets

• RF connector: found at the back of the 128, like the other video ports. This sends the picture to your TV in the same way it



with your 128. The hardened gamester needs a good quality colour screen whilst a business user might settle for a monochrome version.

Commodore's 1901 colour monitor covers all the options - at a price.

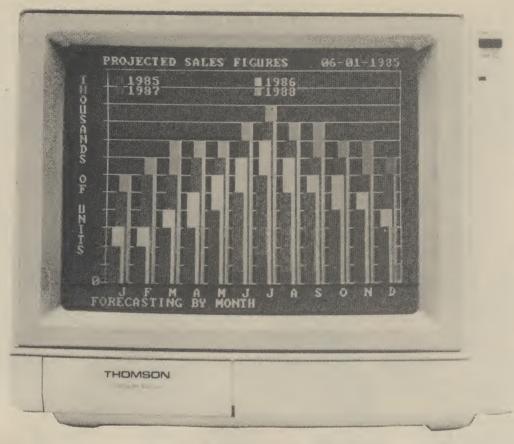


receives a television broadcast. Since the TV is low resolution, the picture produced is pretty poor quality. That's why the 128 will only display a 40 column picture on a TV set.

• composite video connector: This DIN-type socket outputs the red, green and blue picture components in a combined signal to a suitable monitor. It also sends the Audio signals to the monitor's speaker.

One aspect of this socket which makes it different is that it will also carry separate chroma and luminance outputs capable of being received by Commodore monitors. This produces a slightly better quality picture than a standard composite video monitor, but it's still not good enough to produce an 80 column picture.

• RGBI connector: This is immediately to the right of the RF socket. It outputs the sound as well as the red, green and blue picture elements on separate pins, thus ensuring the highest picture quality possible. The 128 can only be used in 80 column mode when connected to an RGBI monitor via this port. The 'I' incidentally, stands for intensity and makes possible the use of 16 colours in 80 column mode instead of the usual 8.



Resolution

Apart from the way in which the signals are transmitted and received, the other factor which determines picture quality is the **resolution** of a monitor. Manufacturers are prone to publishing reams of statistics which are more likely to confuse the prospective buyer than give a clear indication of a monitor's resolution. It's not unusual to see medium or even standard resolution models described as high resolution.

The clearest indicator of a monitor's resolution is the **dot pitch**. This is the distance, in millimetres between two adjacent phosphor dots on the screen. Generally speaking, monitors with a dot pitch of around .65mm are described as standard resolution, about .42mm as medium, and anything below .31mm would be high resolution.

To confuse the issue not all manufacturers indicate the dot pitch of their monitors, but instead quote the **bandwidth** MilliHertz (MHz). Although it's not as accurate an indicator of resolution, generally speaking, the higher the bandwidth, the higher the resolution.

Monitor options

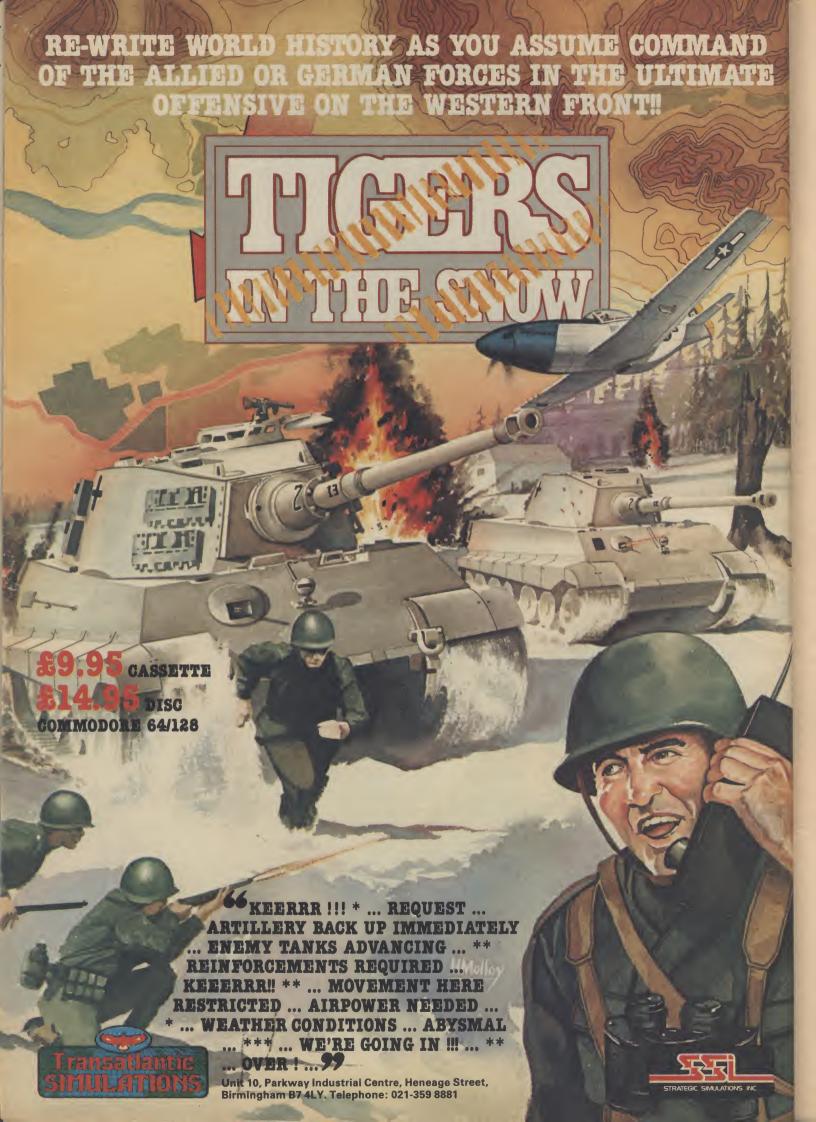
Now that you know all the jargon connected with video, it's time to look at the real buying choices. They split into five groups:

(1) TV/Monitor: This is a combined TV and colour monitor, which is considerably cheaper than a dedicated monitor. On the minus side, the resolution and therefore picture quality will be at the bottom end of the scale. Also, the models shown here only have RGB (no I) inputs, which means only eight colours in 80 column mode.

Thomson CM31481V1 — one of the best alternatives to the 1901.

COLOUR MONITORS

	COLOGIA MICIAI	IUNS	
MODEL	FEATURES	PRICE	COMPANY
CM8500	14" screen Composite video input Standard resolution	£222.95	Philips
CM8501	14" screen RGB input Standard resolution	£243.95	Philips
CM8524	14" screen RBG/composite video inputs Standard resolution Green switch	£279.95	Philips
CM8533	14" screen RGBI/composite video inputs Medium resolution Green switch	£314.95	Philips
CM31481VI	12" screen RGBI/composite video inputs Green/amber switch Tilt/swivel stand optional	£260	Thomson
CM36512VI	14" screen RGBI/composite video inputs Green/amber switch Tilt/swivel stand optional	£270	Thomson
1701	14" screen Composite video with separate chrom/lum inputs Lead included	£230	Commodore
1901	14" screen RGBI/Composite video with separate chrom/lum inputs	£299.99	Commodore



MONOCHROME MONITORS

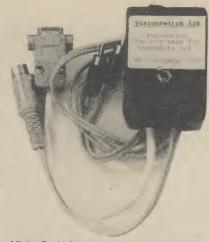
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MODEL	FEATURES	PRICE	COMPANY
BM7502	12" green screen Bandwidth 20MHz Adjustable stand	£87.95	Philips 01-689 2166
BM7522	12" amber screen Bandwidth 20MHz Adjustable stand	£91.95	Philips
BM7542	12" white screen Bandwidth 20MHz Adjustable stand	£119.95	Philips
VM3102VG	12" green screen High resolution Available with amber screen bandwidth 35MHz Tilt/swivel stand optional	£85	Thomson
ZVM1220	12" green screen Available with amber screen Tilt/swivel stand optional	£89.95 (£98.95) (£14)	Zenith 0494 448781
1900M	12" green screen no tilt/swivel stand	£99.95	Commodore 0536 205555
Boxer 12	12" green screen Bandwidth 20MHz composite, RGB matrix	£90	Hantarex 01-778 1414

T.V. MONITORS

MODEL	FEATURES	PRICE	COMPANY
MC05	14" screen T.V. monitor RGB/composite video inputs Low resolution	£220	Ferguson 01-807 3060
CF1114	14" screen T.V/monitor RGB/composite video inputs Low resolution	£209.95	Philips
CTM1400	14" screen T.V./monitor RGB/composite video inputs Low resolution	£220	Fidelity

ADAPTORS

МО	DEL	FEATURES	PRICE	COMPANY
Vid	con 1	RGBI to PAL converter Provides 80 column 16 colour output to T.V. or composite video monitor	£59.95	Trilogic 0274 684 289
Vid	con 2	As 1 but without T.V. option Suitable for use with the Commodore 1701 monitor	£49.95	Trilogic
Vid	con 3	Monochrome version of Vidcon 1	£29.95	Trilogic
Vision		Provides 80 column monochrome picture on a composite video monitor	£9.95	Sabre 0332 556361
Mag Mor	gic nitor	Provides 80 column monochrome display on monitors giving only 40 columns	£14.95	Robtek 01-290 0118



VisionSwitch costs only a tenner but it won't let you display colours.

(2) Monochrome Monitors: Perfect for business use, word processing, etc and certainly the cheapest way of getting to own a monitor — but no colour.

(3) Composite Video Monitors: There are two reasons why you might be using a composite video monitor with a 128. The most likely is that you have upgraded from a 64 and couldn't afford a new RGBI monitor. Alternatively it may be that you have no need of an 80 column screen, but wanted a better than TV quality picture.
(4) RGBI Monitors: This is the bee's knees. An RGBI monitor will enable you to get the best from your 128 in 80 column, 16 colour mode. Most RGBI monitors also incorporate a composite video input. This is essential, as without it the 128 cannot be used in 40 column or hires graphics mode. By the way (for reasons we've no space to go into), you won't be able to connect a monitor with an RGB TTL input, like a lot of the Microvitec

(5) Adaptors: There are various adaptors now on the market which will allow you to use the 128 in 80 column mode on either a TV or a composite video monitor. The cheapest of these will only produce a monochrome screen, but at the top of the range Trilogic's *Vidcon 1* will produce a sixteen colour 80 column screen for £60.

Obviously the picture quality is not up to the standard of 'real' RGBI. Apart from less sharp definition of characters the most noticeable shortcoming is the degradation of colours, which appear slightly muddy. However, at the price it's certainly worth considering for those who already own a 1701 monitor.

Once you've made your choice as to the type of monitor which best suits your needs, it's simply a question of choosing between what's available. As well as considering factors such as screen resulution it's worth looking at the additional features manufacturers include.

Most RGBI monitors have a monochrome switch which gives a green or amber screen, the Thomson range includes both.

Some offer swivel/tilt bases and antiglare screens as standard and the dimensions may be important if you have limited desk space. Bear in mind that you will probably have to pay extra for connecting leads which most good dealers should have in stock.

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* works with C128 in the 64 mode

MICRO-CLERK

Micro-Clerk is a pretty unique piece of software. It offers not only a cash accounts program but wordprocessing, filing, spreadsheet and 'jotter' functions — and they all integrate. It makes full use of the 128's memory and Basic (it's actually written in an 'enhanced' Basic invented by its author) and capitalises on the latest trends for colour, pop-up menus and the like.

You can use it with both the 1570 and 1571 disk drives, but not with the 1541 as you have to make a back-up program before the program will run — and the 1541 won't let you.

Micro-Clerk comes on two disks, one for the main program and the other for the accounts programs. You also have to fit a security "dongle". The user is then taken to an opening "noticeboard", a neat idea, on which is displayed any message that was typed in at close-down the last time the computer was used.

The date the machine was last used is displayed, and the user is given the opportunity of up-dating this or continuing. If this is the first time, you're instructed to back-up the supplied program disk.

When you're done all that, you're confronted with the main menu and its seven options: Accounts, Typing, Filing, Spreadsheet, General, Back-up and Finish.

You can move between the options by using the cursor keys or spacebar or by typing the initial letter. Return must be pressed in each case. Where there are two options with the same initial letter (eg FIL-ING and FINISH), a second typing moves to the second, if required. This procedure is followed with all menus. The user returns to previous menus by pressing ESC.

The cash book

Though the Typing and Filing options are quite adequate, it is the accounts section which will attract many users. This is basically a cash book. Sales ledger and invoicing is not supported, though a module is under development that will remedy this.

The cashbook is on a separate disk, but on a 1571 double-sided disk it might be possible to copy the cash files to the reverse of the main (backed-up) disk, making disk swapping unnecessary. All data

Micro-Clerk offers weekly reports on cash receipts.

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TOTAL CASE	Receipts 2,886.80			

Last month we rounded up all the business and serious software available so far on the new 128. Now it's time for some in-depth reviewing of two particularly impressive packages: Micro-Clerk and Vizawrite Classic.

Gwo's Compa

files are held on the program disks and there are three levels of password protection.

After entry to the accounts section, the user has the choice of selecting weekly or monthly accounts, starting date, type of VAT scheme (standard, or one of the special retailer schemes), and clearing old entries. Some tutorial entries are included, which are handy at first for seeing how the system works, but they would have to be cleared before it could be used seriously.

Analysis headings from 100 to 999 can be set up, and some specimen headings have already been supplied: sales, stationery, VAT adjustment, cost of sales, wages, fixed assets, bank loan, and so on. These are sub-divided into nine groups — sales, purchases, other income, expenses and overheads, capital employed, long term liabilities, fixed assets, current assets, and current liabilities.

The name of the groups can be changed, but not their meaning, since they are used to calculate gross and net profit, turnover and so on.

This constitutes a really powerful nominal ledger, which should satisfy the most scrupulous accountant or Customs and Excise Inspector, printing an automatic audit trail at the end of each



Micro-Clerk keeps tabs on your bank balance.

week or month, as required.

The wordprocessor

Despite its modest description, the "typing" option is a full-function word processor including mail merge and block move. With the "jotter" facility, it's possible to cut and paste information from any other area of the program.

For example, to include accounts details such as balance sheet or the results of any heading, the user must press F7 while

within accounts. Then after moving to "Typing" F8 must be pressed to paste the info onto the jotter. This process is also password-controlled.

The jotter can also be used to access a full diary/calendar function, disk and printer functions, calculator and electric typewriter (printing one line each time Return is pressed).

The spreadsheet

The spreadsheet is a fairly modest affair, with a sheet of 26 columns, 9 characters wide (unchangeable), and 52 rows. Formulae may be up to 70 characters long. When SAVED to disk, a sequential file with the suffix ".SP" is produced, though only the cells on which entries have been made are SAVEd. The part of the spreadsheet on screen at any time can be copied to the jotter by pressing F7. This permits sections of the spreadsheet to be incorporated into "Typing" WP files.

by Karl Dallas



that contains part of the program code which wouldn't fit into the memory.

Loading up

When you've loaded up (three minutes on the 1541 but a claimed 30 seconds on the 1571) you no longer need the program disk except for the spelling checker or the sample document which illustrates the program's more useful functions.

The main improvement over Vizawrite 64 is the 80 column screen, which displays text as it will be printed out. There's also a set of pull-down menus accessed by simple key strokes.

Text memory is larger, too: 712 lines of 80 character length, amounting to about

'pasted' into the text, and Centronics interface software.

Finally, there's a choice of three printer fonts, one of which purports to give near letter quality print. In practise, the letters are far too large for correspondence work.

Now to 64 compatibility. It is possible to read and edit files created on the 64 version of Vizawrite, but they must be renamed if they're to be saved under the new format.

Conclusion

This is a powerful, fairly friendly program which incorporates a lot of sophisticated functions. That means it's manual must be concise and lucid.



Micro-Clerk and Vizawrite Classic reviewed

Mail Merge is one of Vizawrite's more professional features.

Conclusion

This is a very impressive package. Space available does not permit more than a superficial description but any cash trader would find it worthwhile investing in a C128 for this one piece of software alone.

- Micro-Clerk
- Commodore Business Machines 0536 205555
- Price: £99.95 inc VAT
- Format: disk (plus dongle)

VIZAWRITE CLASSIC

Vizawrite Classic is a sophisticated upgrade to the already popular Vizawrite wordprocessor on the Commodore 64. Since then, it's also appeared for the IBM PC and its clones. If you've upgraded from the 64 version of Vizawrite, yes, it is possible to read files on the new program, but more about that later.

Vizawrite comes on one disk with spelling checker on the reverse, and a cartridge

11000 words. This total is 'dynamic', meaning that more text space is available if you make use of one of Vizawrite's classier facilities, glossary phrases.

Extra facilities

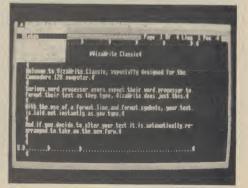
Glossary phrases (sometimes called keyboard macros) are strings of text you can define, save and call up using ALT and a letter of the alphabet. So you could save yourself typing a much-used letter intro by assigning it to a glossary.

The spelling checker is co-resident in memory and can be used mainly without swapping disks. The dictionary carries 30,000 words which can be added to. It also includes plurals and some unlikely words like 'aardvark'. But it won't allow you to 'paste' the correct spelling into the text. Wild cards can also be used. For example: "a???" prints out all four-letter words beginning with "a".

Mailmerge is fully supported both from memory or a file on disk which can be from any program producing ASCII sequential files. There's a set of 'help' screens which the user can edit to include any additional information. There's a pulldown calculator that allows figures to be Sadly, Vizawrite's manual leaves something to be desired. If the documentation were up to the facilities this would probably be the best word-processor for the 128 so far.

- Vizawrite Classic
- Viza Software 0634 813780
- Price: £99.95 (inc VAT)
 - Format: disk plus memory cartridge

On-screen formatting and pop-up menus add to the user-friendliness.



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Tommy In order to keep the sprite moving while a want grother game (Y/N)" After this

1571 upgrade

My inquiry concerns the new 1571 disk drive. I own a Commodore 64 and the 1541 disk drive, as well as quite a good software collection — mostly disk-based. My problem is that, will I be able to run my single-sided disks that ran on the 1541, on the 1571: as this is a double-sided disk drive or will I have to convert all my single-sided disks on to double-sided disks. I would be grateful for any pearls of wisdom, advice and information that you can supply me with, thank-you. P. Scerri, Hants.

The only difference between the single and double sided disks are that the latter get read on both sides, giving twice the capacity: there is no other difference (in 64 mode) between disks run on a 1541 and a 1571. Provided that Commodore actually decide to market the 1571 it will read all existing 1541 disks without needing to make any changes. So far, we've only seen it inside the new 128D machine.

Sprite control

I have been writing a game for the Commodore 64 and have come across a couple of problems.

I'm controlling sprites by using the keys but I have to keep on tapping the key to make the sprite move. Is there any way a sprite will move with the key held down and stop when the key is lifted?

Álso, can you give me the joystick commands — I can't find them in the manual.

Martyn Gay, Hants.

sprite moving while a key is depressed you must make the keys auto-repeat. This is done by POKE 650, 128 which makes all the keys repeat. To restore the repeats to only the cursor and space keys, type POKE 650,0.

As for the joysticks, there are no actual 'commands' for reading them; you have to read the joystick registers and then carry out the appropriate action depending on the values. The registers are held at 56321 (port 1) and 56320 (port 2). The five controls on the joystick are shown by the following 'bits' in the register: Function: N. S. W. E. Fire Bit No: 0 1 2 3 4

If the joystick is moved in a particular direction, or the fire button is pressed, then the relevant 'bit' changes from 1 to 0. If you want to play around with writing your own joystick routines and are not familiar with using AND and OR operators to read individual bits then either Commodore's Programmers Reference Manual or one of the other reference books for the 64 would be a worthwhile purchase.

Lose the keys

I would appreciate it very much if you could help. I have written a Noughts and Crosses program for my project at College, but there is just one problem I don't know how to solve. You are my last hope as I have consulted my Tutors at College and they cannot help.

The game is for two players, when the screen has been set up the computer then runs through a series of checks to see what keys are pressed, for this I used: IF PEEK (197) = X. X is the keycode for the key I want pressed.

When the game is over the users are prompted with the question "Do you

want another game (Y/N)". After this is printed the computer then prints, without any reason, the keys that were pressed by the users during the game. It is the printing of these keys I can't manage to erase from the program.

I've tried setting the store (197) equal to 0 but the result doesn't change. I would be very grateful if you could help me.

G. Smith, Essex.

What is happening is that you are reading the 'key press' register, not the keyboard buffer. The result is that the buffer fills up the characters as the keys are pressed until the first time you use an INPUT or GET command, then the entire contents of the buffer are printed out.

The solution is to clear the keyboard buffer before asking the 'another game?' question. This can be done by simply setting the 'no of characters in the buffer' register to zero by *POKE 198,0* in the line immediately before the INPUT prompt.

Printer problem

I've just bought the MPS 801 printer but I can't seem to get it working except on test. I've tried taking printouts of programs on screen but it won't work.

Could you please help me and tell me whether there's a tape, disk or cartridge for the 64 that will get the printer working.

A. Pritchard, Staffs.

You should have got a handbook with the printer, which would give you all the information you need. However, there are three things you can carry out to test the printer which will also indicate how you can use it in your own pro-

grams. To test that the printer actually works (assuming you have the correct cable plugged in from the serial port on the computer to the printer) type the following lines exactly as shown:

OPEN 4,4: PRINT#4, "THIS IS

A TEST"
CLOSE 4

The printer should print the words inside the inverted commas; if it does not, and you have checked that it is correctly powered up and 'on-line', then the printer would appear to be faulty and you should return it to your dealer. If this test works then type the following:

10 OPEN 4,4

20 PRINT#4, "THIS IS A TEST FROM A PROGRAM"

30 PRINT # 4, "THIS IS THE SECOND

40 CLOSE 4: END

Now type RUN and the printer should print the two lines correctly. Finally, to list a program that is in the computer, type the following: OPEN 4,4: CMD4: LIST. When the LIST has finished, type PRINT#4: CLOSE4. If there wasn't a handbook with your printer I suggest you contact your dealer who can obtain one for you.

Control your sprites

I've consulted my manual to help me about designing some graphics on the 64.

The manual wasn't as good as I thought as this was the first time I had bothered looking through it.

I soon found out how to change the sprite colours and how to print three different sprites on the screen at once. I was pleased with myself at first but when I tried printing four different sprites at the same time a lot of rubbish came on the top of the screen.

This is my first problem, my second is how to colour the sprite graphics in different colours, and how to move them

with a joystick.

I have tried looking at listings but I can't work out which bits do what. Please, please, please help me.

A. Stevens, Hants.

When you are using sprites, you must be careful where you store them. I suspect that initially you were using the cassette buffer to store the data for the three sprites, but of course putting the data for 4 sprites there will have overwritten the top part of the screen memory, hence the rubbish on the screen. In order to have sufficient room to store a large number of sprites you must reserve an area of memory. Even then it is not straightforward since this memory must be in the

same 16 kbyte 'block' as the screen memory.

The example given in the Programmer's Reference Manual moves the top of memory down so that you are left with only 12K of memory. However, if you move the screen and character set plus the sprite data to the 4k RAM area from \$C000 (49152) then you will still have the whole of the BASIC RAM left, plus enough room for 16 sprites.

As for getting multicolour sprites, this is done by setting the relevant 'bit' in the Sprite Multi-Colour Mode register (53276). You must also set the multi-colour registers with the other 2 colours (the 4th colour being the background colour). These registers are at 53285 and 53286.

Don't forget that in multi-colour mode your sprites have only half the horizontal resoution; this means that the colour of any pixel is determined by 'pairs of bits' in the sprite data. As for moving a sprite with a joystick, this and all the other things I've mentioned, are included in the following program (note that pressing the FIRE button will change the primary sprite colour).

Take a tip from us, Tommy's Tips are the best. When it comes to answering your technical and programming queries, whether they're on the 64, 128, 16 or Plus/4, Tommy's your man. Go on, write to him: Tommy's Tips, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Sound recorder

I have been using a Commodore 64 for two years now. For my birthday, my parents bought me a copy of *Ghostbusters*. I enjoyed the music track so much that I tried recording it on my cassette deck. This was impossible. I connected my deck to the AUDIO/VIDEO port, but without results. Please could you help me?

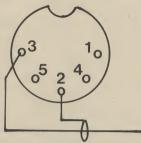
M. Teusch, Luxembourg.

I suspect you are using the wrong pins on the audio/video socket since it is perfectly possible to record from this. You must make a cable with the centre wire connected to pin 3

of a 5-pin (or 8-pin if the later model) DIN plug and the outer screen braid connected to pin 2 of the plug. It is possible you have read the connections the wrong way round when transferring the socket diagram in the manual to the plug.

When you wire up the plug, the reverse of the plug (i.e. the pins facing away from you) should look

like this:



If you have wired the plug correctly, then it is possible you are using the wrong input on your Hifi. You should use a 'line' input rather than a 'mic' input socket in order to match the impedence.

ALT on 128

I have been the proud owner of a 128 for the past three months, and I have a query for you.

As the manual to my computer is in German would you explain the function of the ALT key?

Neil Finnerty, BFPO 36.

The ALT key functions in very much the same way as the CTRL or the CBM keys; its use is therefore determined by the program running at the time rather than it having any actual effect on its own. The ALT key is checked by the same register that checks for the CTRL, CBM, and SHIFT keys, except that in 128 mode this register is at address 211 (in 64 mode this register is at 653). The various keys set 'bits' in the register as follows:

Key press: SHIFT CBM CTRL ALT CAPS LOCK Bit number:

Thus if you PEEK (211) while the ALT key is pressed you will find a value of 8, while if both SHIFT and ALT are pressed you will get a value of 9 etc. If you use ALT in conjunction with the function keys for example you get a further eight options since you can still use SHIFT; add the ability to set CAPS LOCK as well and you have the option of at least 40 functions from the eight 'F' keys. Note that these extra functions must be set up by your own programs; they do not exist in the machine already.

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Commodore 64 Computer and User's Guide £100. CBM 1541 disk drive £120. All together only £200. All as new. Contact Austin on Bournemouth 297611 after 4p.m.

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Swedish CBM 64 user wants to swap programs with hackers all over the world. Only on disk. Enclose a list to: Fredrik Stakeberg, PL 1502, 440 06 Grabo, Sweden.

More than 600 CBM programs on disk legated. All for sale (cheapl). List from W. Wernersen, Postlagernd, D-2093 Stelle, W. Germany.

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C-64 tapes, disks, ROMS for sale. Wanted: Magic Voice ROM & cheap video digitiser. John, 3O Highwood Avenue, Finchley, London N12 8QP.

Norweagian C-128 onwers want to swap programs and tips for the C-128 with people all over the world. I have only disk. Write to: Svein Egil Sorland, G77O Nordefjordeid, Norway. Swap Commodore Plus/4 Joystick dattacorder software, Mayhem Treasure Island, Olympiad, Xargon, Wars, Harbour, Attack, many more for MSX or C/64. Phone O1-428 5624

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C-16 owner wants penpal to swap games, listings etc. Write to Simon Richardson, 40 Darkwood Way, Shadwell LS17 8BQ or ring Leeds 661834 after 5pm.

Commodore 64 owner wants to swap programs with people all over the world. Send list to: Mikael Käleumark, Rosenlundsgatan 22D 852 51 Sundsvall, Sweden.

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CBM 128&64 Swedish hacker wants to swap software for the 128&64. All letters answered. Please write to Daniel Mostrom, Box 4022, 550 04 Jonkping Sweden.

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CBM 64 user wants to correspond with similar to exchange ideas and programs. Write to Dan Nordqvist Stormvindsg 11, 723 48 Västeras, Sweden

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By Mike Pattenden

Games Plus ames Plus Games

Revs racing game. If it works properly confidently expect it to transform Revs into the classiest racing simulation for the 64. More information from Meedmore Distribution on 051 521 2202 and can they please send me

It's time for a car update. Just to show you the industry's making as much money as ever out of you all, the sports cars keep rolling out.

Thrifty Steve Wilcox, big boss of Elite, just invested profits from Commando in a secondhand gold Turbo Esprit. Meanwhile over at Melbourne House those Fist sales have led to another Porsche and a BMW rolling in

Allo, allo, allo it's silly mailout time again. So far this week I've received a helmet and a truncheon through the post. Putting two and two together I cleverly deduced that a police game was on the way.

And I was right. It's called The Force and it's a strategy game from Argus that's being produced with police cooperation. You might say that they're helping Argus with their enquiries.

Anyway you play the part of a superintendent facing difficult situations that you must handle with tact and discretion. Sounds like they could use a copy at **Hendon**.

Whilst we're on the subject of silly mailouts, English Software, unable to produce Elektra Glide on time, plumped instead for a key ring with a steel block on the end of the chain. I dutifully put my house keys on it.

ello and welcome once again to Hotshots. So nice to have you along. Come closer, I've got something I want to tell you, buy me a drink and the information's yours

Cheers! Well between you and me, a grubby little hotshotophile in a dirty mac informs me of a 'naughty' party game for adults.

Saucily entitled 'Posthorn' the game from, er, sizzling Satyr Software (that's quite enough Fleet St filth from you — Page 3 Ed) promises party fun for adults with 'little or no interest in computers'. Satyr have thoughtfully included a turbo loader on the game to get you up and running (so to speak) as quickly as possible. .

Scooby Dooby Doo where are you update: The on/off computer cartoon There's now a hole in my pocket —

stupid piece of software for Argus." Argus Software staff cause a disturbance whilst impersonating police officers impersonating a successful software house, whilst impersonating a funny photo.

"Right, you're nicked on suspicion of promoting a criminally

game is definitely on once again. Elite have now put it out for a "well known" development house to finish. The game looks set for release in May. Will it be worth a Scooby Snack . .

Word reaches me that there is now an analogue joystick out that is specifically available for Firebird's

hope the game doesn't have the same effect when they price it . .

You may remember me mentioning Domark's poor taste and the adverse reactions they received when Friday 13th appeared last December. Well we received a very humble note saying they'd withdrawn the adverts in a when he drew it . grand gesture to public decency.

THIS MOTHUS BARRADA м 0 то В. Р.Д.о. PRE HOLLING THIS PET BERK TO RGIN M. UNLISS WE REAFNE ESM WORTH OF USED 704 IT PORTER IN AN OLOT PAIR OF IN-GROSES, WAT FRED UE W A BLV LINER AND FIRM POWED DOWN THE DISTRED BOWL OF A FORSON TON TOILET IN LEGISLAT SLOUGH, Whe By On F AGENT KUBINSKI OF The P. P. 1. O.K. G.b. Slough B WACH WILL REVE IT WE WEN'T Activision themselves. All 4:007 HAT. So If YOU WIND been busy with the Pritt-stick or are there more World PeAc Send US THE BOY PAPEL

More poisonous mail filters through the system to Priory Court. There's a terrible campaign of hate being waged against Activision's Computer People down in Slough. Who is responsible for these acts of violence against the pet people? An office cynic suggested good publicity eh?

Has Andrew Wright sinister faces behind this grisly business? I demand to know the truth. Who is the PPLO? Make yourself known.

As for the little berk you're holding our budget won't extend to all that used bog paper. Will the entire set of Zzap back issues do instead . . ?

ped by the Advertising Standards Authority after complaints against the artwork were upheld. A funny coincidence is that's my birthday so get those pressies off now, I don't mind if they're a bit late.

Equally offensive though is US Gold's vile sexist advert for a duff looking game entitled Legend of the Amazon Women. It depicts scantily clad creatures with deformed limbs and big bums and (that's quite enough of that — Ed.) Perhaps the artist's hand was shaking too much

Commodore Crash Shock! There Truth of the matter is they got slap- was so much excitement at the pros-

pect of seeing a real (gasp) Amiga at the Which Computer Show recently that the floor of the Commodore stand collapsed completely sending thousands of pounds of redundant (whoops) hardware crashing to the ground. Is this an omen for the future I wonder? The way I see it if Commodore go on cocking things up there won't be a company by the end of the

Meanwhile, Commodore bigwigs sweat it out as they contemplate repaying the loans they received.

And that's it for this month. So long sleaze lovers, keep those ears to the ground . . . Mike Pattenden



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